HOGARTH LECTURES
No. 13.

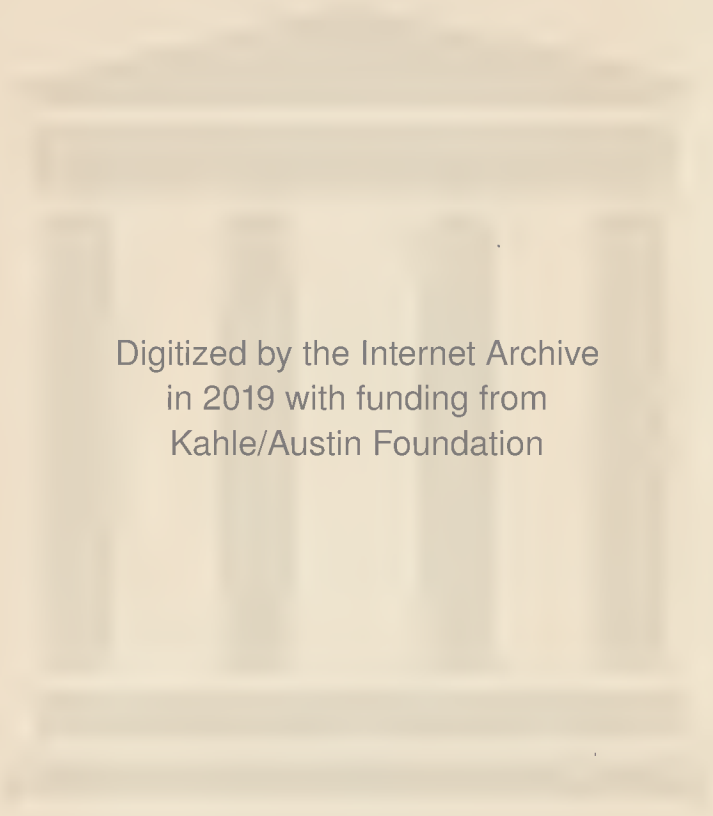
GERMAN LYRIC POETRY

NORMAN MACLEOD

THE HOGARTH PRESS

NUNC COGNOSCO EX PARTE

TRENT UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY


Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2019 with funding from
Kahle/Austin Foundation

https://archive.org/details/germanlyricpoetr0000macl

GERMAN LYRIC POETRY

HOGARTH LECTURES ON LITERATURE SERIES

Editors: George Rylands, Leonard Woolf.

No. 1. *Introductory Volume:* A LECTURE ON LECTURES
By Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch ("Q"), King Edward VII Professor of English Literature, Cambridge University.

No. 2. TRAGEDY
By F. L. Lucas, Fellow of King's College, Cambridge.

No. 3. STUDIES IN SHAKESPEARE
By Allardyce Nicoll, Professor of English Language and Literature in the University of London.

No. 4. THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH BIOGRAPHY
By Harold Nicolson.

No. 5. LYRICAL POETRY FROM BLAKE TO HARDY
By H. J. C. Grierson, Professor of Rhetoric and English Literature, Edinburgh University.

No. 6. The STRUCTURE OF THE NOVEL
By Edwin Muir.

No. 7. PHASES OF ENGLISH POETRY
By Herbert Read.

No. 8. THE WHIRLIGIG OF TASTE
By E. E. Kellett.

No. 9. NATURE IN ENGLISH LITERATURE
By Edmund Blunden.

No. 10. NOTES ON ENGLISH VERSE SATIRE
By Humbert Wolfe.

No. 11. POLITICS AND LITERATURE
By G. D. H. Cole.

No. 12. THE COURSE OF ENGLISH CLASSICISM
By Sherard Vines.

No. 13. GERMAN LYRIC POETRY
By Norman Macleod.

In Preparation

PHASES OF FICTION
By Virginia Woolf.

REVOLUTIONS IN LITERARY METHOD
By Peter Quennell.

THE RELIGIOUS ELEMENT IN LITERATURE
By Rose Macaulay.

GERMAN LYRIC POETRY

NORMAN MACLEOD

Published by Leonard & Virginia Woolf at The Hogarth Press, 52 Tavistock Square, London, W.C.1

1930

PT971 .M3

First Edition, 1930

Printed in Great Britain by
Hazell, Watson & Viney, Ltd., London and Aylesbury.

PREFACE

In common with all students of German Lyric Poetry, I am under special obligations to two authorities—Dr. John Lees, the author of *The German Lyric* (1914), and Dr. Philipp Witkop, the author of *Die Neuere Deutsche Lyrik* (1913) and *Deutsche Dichtung der Gegenwart* (1924). To these works I refer any readers who desire a fuller and more scholarly treatment of the subject.

I have also to thank the holders of the copyright of certain poems for permission to quote and translate them. In particular, my thanks are due to Freiherr Dr. Börries von Münchhausen, Herr Stefan George, Herr Franz Werfel, and the representatives of the late Richard Dehmel, Gustav Falke, Detlev von Liliencron, Paul Heyse, and Rainer Maria Rilke. Before his lamented death, Dr. Hugo von Hofmannsthal kindly gave me similar permission. George Meredith's poem, "Beauty Rohtraut," is quoted by permission of Messrs. Constable & Co., Ltd., London, and Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, and the Proprietors of the *Glasgow Herald* have allowed me to republish certain verses which first appeared in that newspaper.

Besides these, I have obligations of another kind—to my old teacher, Dr. Otto Schlapp, Emeritus Professor of German in the University of Edinburgh, who, in the course of teaching German,

165732

took Letters, Art and Music as his province, and imparted to his students something of his own enthusiasm for them, and something also (one hopes) of his own taste and knowledge; to Professor Alexander Gray, of Aberdeen, my master in the art of translation into Broad Scots; to my former fellow-students, Miss Margaret Coutts, and Mr. John Allan, of the British Museum, for criticism and encouragement when both were greatly needed; and to my wife, by whose skill in versecraft I have constantly profited.

N. M.

CONTENTS

PAGE

PREFACE 5

LYRIC POETS BEFORE GOETHE

I. MINNESINGERS AND FOLKSINGERS . . 9

II. FROM HUTTEN TO KLOPSTOCK . . . 36

THE GREAT AGE

I. GOETHE, SCHILLER AND HÖLDERLIN . . 53

II. THE ROMANTIC POETS, PLATEN AND HEINE . 74

THE LYRIC SINCE HEINE

I. THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY . . 103

II. THE LAST FIFTY YEARS . . . 123

INDEX 157

GERMAN LYRIC POETRY

LYRIC POETS BEFORE GOETHE

(I) MINNESINGERS AND FOLKSINGERS

In his clear and comprehensive work on the German Lyric, Dr. Lees laments the lack of interest which English readers (apart from students of German) have shown in German poetry of the nineteenth century. This is all the more regrettable, as German lyrics are free from the faults which beset German prose, until it seems to a foreigner to lack ease and grace, dignity and simplicity. The lyric is simple and melodious, sometimes tender and sometimes passionate. The verse-forms, except for the unrhymed measures, have all their counterparts in English, and sound as sweetly to an English as to a German ear. Indeed, in no other foreign language does poetry make such a direct appeal to the English reader. Unfortunately the scarcity of English translations, except of Goethe, Schiller, and Heine, is a hindrance to the appreciation of German poetry, and though there is no lack in English of well-written studies of German Literature, they fail, for this reason alone, to attract those who are ignorant of German.

In this essay an attempt is made to provide, not only a sketch of the development of German lyric poetry, but some verse translations which may

serve, however imperfectly, to illustrate this development. "The best in this kind are but shadows, and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them."

And at the outset I may be allowed to plead for the practice of verse translation. The value of these renderings as a help to the understanding of the originals does not depend on their literary merits. For my own part, I have found no method of appreciating a poem in a foreign language at all comparable to that of translating it, as nearly as possible, in the style and metre of the original. And the benefit is not confined to the translator; for even a defective translation (as all renderings must be in some measure) helps by contrast to show readers the merits of the original and stimulates those who know the original to produce a worthier version.

The history of German poetry is strangely unlike that of English. England has had since the time of Chaucer a succession of poets, each of whom has been aware of the work of his predecessors, if not indebted to it. Thus Spenser calls Chaucer his master; Dryden modernises him; Wordsworth goes back to the original, and William Morris is again a confessed disciple of the old poet. Even where an author like Pope writes in a new style, he is still in the succession. Pope admired Spenser and edited Shakespeare, and only the most extravagant of nineteenth-century critics failed to perceive the greatness of Pope's own work.

In German literature there is a lack of great names between the thirteenth and eighteenth centuries, and not only so, but there is an absence of continuity. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries

there is a great school of Minnesingers. These are succeeded by the Meistersingers, but then there is something like a collapse. In the seventeenth century Opitz attempts a revival on French and classical lines; later in the same century other writers attempt another revival on Italian models. Neither attempt produces much of permanent value. In the eighteenth century Klopstock, with more success, follows Milton, but it is not till the coming of Goethe, late in the century, that German poetry again achieves freedom and mastery, and it is only since Goethe's day that there has been a continuous development. In that excellent anthology, the *Oxford Book of German Verse*, there are nearly six hundred poems; only a hundred of these were written by poets born before Goethe, and Goethe died less than a century ago.

During the great gap between the thirteenth and eighteenth centuries, when the work of the schools of poetry is so disappointing, the Volkslied or Folk-poetry serves in a measure to redeem the disappointment. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the only lyrics worthy of notice are folk-songs ; in the sixteenth and seventeenth the best are, if not folk-songs, directly inspired by folk-poetry, and the revival of poetry under Goethe coincides with a renewed love and knowledge of the folk-song. Volkslied thus serves to connect earlier and later German poetry, for the German lyric from the time of Goethe till 1870, and in a lesser measure till the present day, is influenced by the Volkslied to a much greater extent than the English lyric has ever been by the English ballad.

To this influence are mainly due the simplicity and the melody which characterise German lyric

poetry. Folk-poetry must be simple in language and ideas; verses which are sung must have a certain rhythm. English lyrics have been written as a rule for a cultured class of readers, who are willing to take some pains to appreciate the author's meaning. German lyrics have more often been written to be sung, and to be sung to a popular audience. In recent years German poetry has become more "literary" in spirit; certainly the more prominent recent poets like Stefan George, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, and Rainer Maria Rilke do not pipe as the linnets sing, but even in modern times the connection between music and poetry is much closer than in England.

What remains of Old High German literature, i.e. that dating before 1100, is of a historical rather than literary interest. But towards the end of the twelfth century, there was a sudden spring-time in which the lyric particularly blossomed. At this period the ideas of chivalry were spreading across Europe, and on these ideas was based a new school of love-poetry, which in Germany was called the Minnesang or Love-song, Minne being chivalric or romantic love. The Minnesang was not a direct outcome of German chivalry; it was based on a Provençal literary model, which reflected the state of Provençal society. There, a lady of rank might expect to be adored more or less openly by one or more admirers. Still, as she was usually married to someone else, a certain discretion had to be observed. "The binding convention arose," says Dr. Lees, "that no hint of the actual personality should be given in the song." "This," he adds, "naturally opened the door for the celebration of merely hypothetical passions, and the absence of sincerity,

directness, and spontaneity is generally regarded as the chief weakness of the Minnesang."

The Minnesang was founded on a social convention, which probably did not exist in Germany, and the singers had also adopted from the Provençal an elaborate verse-form. With these disadvantages the Minnesang seems to us rather a difficult game than a serious contribution to literature. But the greatest of the Minnesingers did succeed in transcending the limitations of subject and style. Here are the opening lines of a poem written by Friedrich von Hausen in 1189 on his departure on a Crusade :

" Mîn herze und mîn lîp diu wellent scheiden,
Diu mit ein ander varnt nu mange zît.
Der lîp wil gerne vehten an die heiden :
Sô hât iedoch daz herze erwelt ein wîp
Vor al der werlt."

" My body and my heart are fain to sever,
Who fared together many and many a year ;
One goes against the Turk as glad as ever,
But one has chosen me a lady dear
Before the world."

Friedrich was to fall at Philomelium in Asia Minor, and the pathos of his farewell gives human interest to the closing lines of the poem, which might else be regarded as a literary exercise.

" Sît ich dich, herze, niht wohl mac erwenden
Du'n wellest mich vil trûreclîchen lân,
Sô bite ich got, daz er dich ruoche senden
An eine stat, dâ man dich wol enpfâ.

Owê wie sol ez armen dir ergân !
Wie torstest eine an solhe nôt ernenden ?
Wer sol dir dîne sorge helfen enden
Mit solhen triuwen, als ich hân getân ? "

" O Heart, since well I know I may not bend thee,
And thou wilt leave me here, with many a care,
I pray to God that wheresoe'er He send thee
Thou mayst receive a kindly welcome there.
Woe's me, poor Heart, how sadly wilt thou fare !
How durst thou face the troubles that attend thee ?
Who will in all thy bitter need befriend thee
With comfort such as I was wont to bear ? "

The greatest of the Minnesingers was Walther von der Vogelweide, who flourished between 1170 and 1230. Walther is of all Minnesingers the most completely free from the trammels of the school. He was without doubt the greatest German lyric poet before Goethe. Walther has three distinctive qualities hardly found in any mediæval poet before Dante—a complete mastery of his chosen form, a wide range of subject (for he writes of the education of children and of political controversies just as easily as of love and nature), and an individual outlook. Though of noble family, he was poor, and practised his art for money, travelling from court to court till the Emperor Frederick II (the World's Wonder), himself a poet, gave him a fief. This enabled him to spend his later years in comfort.

Walther's finest lyric is " Under the Linden," which is put into the mouth of a lady. How far removed it is from merely conventional love-poetry !

" Under der linden
An der heide,
Dâ unser zweier bette was,
Dâ muget ir vinden
Schône beide
Gebrochen bluomen unde gras.
Vor dem walde in einem tal
Tandaradei !
Schône sanc diu nahtegal.

Ich kam gegangen
Zuo der ouwe
Dô was mîn vriedel komen ê.
Dâ wart ich enpfangen,
Hêre frouwe,
Daz ich bin saelic iemer mê.
Kust er mich ? Wol tûsentstunt !
Tandaradei !
Seht wie rôt mir ist der munt."

" Under the linden
By the heather,
'Twas yonder I and my darling lay
You might discover
Crushed together
Grass and many a broken spray
Twixt the forest and the vale
(Tandaradei)
Merrily sang the nightingale.

Early I wended
O'er meadows shady,
Ah, but my love was there before !
So was I friended,
By Our Lady,
I will be glad for evermore.
Kissed a thousand times, I vow
(Tandaradei),
See how red my lips are now ! "

When the passer-by sees the bower, the lady adds :

" Bî den rôsen er wol mac
Tandaradei !
Merken wâ mirz houbet lac."

" By the roses he may spy
(Tandaradei)
Where my laughing head did lie."

" Daz er bî mir laege,
Wessez iemen
(Nu enwelle got !) sô schamte ich mich
Wes er mit mir pflaege
Niemer niemen
Bevinde daz wan er und ich
Und ein kleinez vogellîn,
Tandaradei
Daz mac wohl getriuwe sîn."

" O, if one ever
Knew I had lain there—
May God forbid, for my shame were sore,
Never one, never
Knew we were fain there,
But he and I and no man more,
Save the little nightingale
(Tandaradei),
She will never tell the tale ! "

In a later poem, occasioned by the Emperor Frederick's Crusade of 1228, the poet strikes a deeper note. Yet the feeling is as genuine and the expression as fine as in the other.

" Owê war sint verswunden alliu mîniu jâr !
Ist mir mîn leben getroumet, oder ist ez wâr ?
Daz ich ie wânde, daz iht waere, was daz iht ?
Dar nâch hân ich geslâfen und enweiz es niht.

Nû bin ich erwachet, und ist mir unbekant,
Daz mir hie vor was kündic als mîn ander hant.
Liut' unde lant, dâ ich von kinde bin erzogen,
Die sint mir fremde worden, reht als ez sî gelogen.
Die mîne gespilen wâren, die sint traege und alt.
Vereitet ist daz velt, verhouwen ist der walt :
Wan daz daz wazzer fliuzet, als ez wîlent flôz,
Für wâr ich wânde mîn unglücke wurde grôz.
Mich grüezet maneger trâge, der mich bekande ê wol.
Diu werlt ist allenthalben ungenâden vol.
Als ich gedenke an manegen wünneclîchen tac,
Die mir sint enpfallen gar als in daz mer ein slac,
Iemer, mêre, owê !

. . . . . .

Die wilden vogel die betrüebet unser klage :
Waz wunders ist, ob ich dâ von vil gar verzage ?
Waz spriche ich tumber man durch mînen boesen zorn ?
Swer dirre wünne volget, der hât jene dort verlorn.
Iemer mêre, owê !

Owê wie uns mit süezen dingen ist vergeben !
Ich sihe die gallen mitten in dem honege sweben.
Diu Werlt ist ûzen schoene, wîz, grüen' unde rôt,
Und innân swarzer varwe, vinster sam der tôt.
Swen si nû habe verleitet, der schouwe sînen trost :
Er wirt mit swacher buoze grôzer sünde erlôst.
Dar an gedenket, ritter ! ez ist iuwer dinc ;
Ir traget die liehten helme und manegen herten rinc,
Dar zuo die vesten schilte und diu gewîhten swert.
Wolte got, waer' ich der sigenünfte wert !
Sô wolte ich nôtic man verdienen rîchen solt.
Joch meine ich niht die huoben noch der hêrren golt :
Ich wolte saelden krône êweclîchen tragen :
Die möhte ein soldenaere mit sîme sper bejagen.
Möht' ich die lieben reise gevaren über sê,
Sō wolte ich denne singen ' wol,' und niemer mēre
' owê,'
Niemer mēre ' owê.' "

"Woe's me, where have they vanished, the years that once I knew?
Was all my life a vision, or was it ever true?
That which I saw and handled, was it in dreams alone?
Then have I slept my time away and waking never known.
Awakened from my dreaming, a stranger now I stand
Where all was once familiar as was my very hand.
My country and its people who grew in youth beside me
Are utterly estrangèd, as though they had denied me.
The lads with whom I sported are old and weak indeed,
Felled is the ancient forest and wasted is the mead.
Did I not see the river flow as it flowed of yore,
Then should I find in very truth my sorrow all too sore.
How many a man looks coldly, who was a trusty friend!
The world is overfull of woe, from furthest end to end
And now I do bethink me of many a pleasant day,
Gone like a dint in water, lost ever and for aye.
Evermore, woe's me!

. . . . .

The very birds are troubled by our increasing pain,
Have I not greater reason to murmur and complain?
But what!—I speak in folly, by wicked anger driven
Who follows this world's glory, must lose the joys of heaven.
Evermore, woe's me!

Woe's me, the sweets they gave us are poisoned one and all,
And midst the honey floating, I see the bitter gall.
Fair outwardly the world is, all white and green and red,
Within 'tis black and bitter and gloomy as the dead.

He whom the world deceivèd true comfort yet may win,
Lo, with but little penance he may be freed from sin.
Yours is the cause, ye nobles, to knighthood I appeal,
Yours are the gleaming helmet, the coat with rings of steel,

The shield stout in the mellay, the sword the priest
hath blessed,
Would God that I were worthy to share your conquer-
ing quest !
So poor a man as I may be would earn a rich reward,
But not the gold or manors of any earthly lord ;
Nay, tis a crown in heaven which even I might bear,
That were a noble guerdon for a crusader's spear !
On that dear journey faring across the Southern Sea ;
' O Joy ' would be my burden and never ' Woe is me.'
Nevermore, ' Woe's me.' "

According to tradition Walther was buried in the cloisters of Würzburg Cathedral, and left his property to the monks, on the understanding that every day they were to provide food for the birds, who had taught him the art of song. There is indeed an echo of bird song in his poetry, in the refrain of " Under the Linden," in the complaint that the birds were troubled by human sorrow, and in his very name " Walter of the Bird Meadow."

After Walther there was a steady decline. The Minnesingers were succeeded by the Meistersingers, and in their elaborate but uninspired compositions the last gleams of poetry flickered and faded. The divine flame was kept alive by the Folk-singers.

It is possible that folk-poetry was composed at the same time as the Minnesang. The Minnesang was the poetry of lords and ladies, and there was room for something more popular. In the anonymous scraps of song which have come down to us from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries are some which may be regarded as either early forms of the Minnesang or early folk-songs. For instance, in a Latin letter from a girl to a monk (some German

Eloise to her Abelard) are a few lines of German verse :

" Dû bist mîn, ich bin dîn :
Des solt dû gewis sîn.
Dû bist beslozzen
In mînem herzen ;
Verlorn ist daz slüzzelîn :
Dû muost immer drinne sîn."

" Thou to me
I to thee :
Sure thereof mayst thou be ;
Enclosed thou art now
Within my heart now ;
I have lost the little key :
Therein ever must thou be."

If the form is akin to the Minnesang, the spirit is that of the Folk-song.

Again, here are some lines by a twelfth-century Minnesinger, the Lord of Kürenberg, who wrote in a stanza of his own invention, less elaborate than that used by later singers. (The poem is put in the mouth of a lady.)

" Ich zôch mir einen valken mêre danne ein jâr.
Dô ich in gezamete, als ich in wolte hân,
Und ich im sîn gevîdere mit golde wol bewant,
Er huop sich ûf vil hôhe und floug in anderiu lant.

Sît sach ich den valken schône fliegen.
Er fuorte an sînem fuoze sîdîne riemen,
Und was im sîn gevidere alrôt guldîn
Got sende si zesamene, die geliebe wellen gerne sîn ! "

" I trained a noble falcon, yea longer than a year,
I tamed him to my pleasure, I held him ever dear,
And all his plumes with ruddy gold I covered o'er and o'er,
On high he rose, afar he flew unto a foreign shore.

Again I saw my falcon, how swift of flight, how fair !
And on his foot, I marked it well, a silken thong he bare.
And how the red gold glittered on his feathers as he flew !
God send them soon together,who love each other true."

The Falcon metaphor is common to the poets of that age, but the metre was, as time showed, easily adapted for the purpose of folk-poetry. At any rate folk-song emerged in the thirteenth century and survived till the nineteenth. Prince Eugene and Frederick the Great are celebrated by the Folk-singers, and there is a Low-German ballad on Blücher and Waterloo.

The amount of German folk-song which has been collected is very great, and its range is very wide. Nearly every aspect of human life is represented. There are songs of love and death, of meeting and parting, of Nature and the Seasons, of work and play, and good fellowship. Then there are historical ballads and political and controversial songs. There are also poems founded on the romantic themes invented or handed down from earlier times. The tale of Hildebrand and Hadubrand, which is told in one of the fragments of Old High German verse, is retold in a ballad. Curiously enough, some of the Minnesingers appear in folk-poetry as heroes of romance. Heinrich von Morungen, one of the greatest of the early

poets, appears as the noble Moringer, who is absent from home for seven years and returns just as his wife is about to marry another, who also bears a Minnesinger's name. In the Moringer's mouth are put stanzas written by Walther, in fine disregard of the rights of literary property, which were carefully observed by the Minnesingers. Another Minnesinger, Tannhäuser, is commemorated in the ballad of the Knight Tannhäuser, who lived for a year with the Lady Venus in the hill. So far as we know, there is nothing in this minstrel's career to justify the story, which has procured him an immortality such as he would never have attained by his literary efforts. There is an odd parallel to this in the Scottish ballad of Thomas the Rhymer and the Fairy Queen. Thomas, like Tannhäuser, was an early mediæval poet. Again, Ossian, the Gaelic poet, was taken away to the Land of the Young.

There are even religious parodies of popular songs, in which love poetry has been adapted for the service of the Church. Two versions of a song beginning:

> " Den liebsten bulen, den ich han "
>
> " (The dearest lover that I have) "

are extant, the sacred version being based on the secular.

These songs and ballads are called folk-poetry, not because they were composed by the folk, but because they were made for the folk, and became the property of the folk. Unlike the Minnesingers, the Folk-singers claimed no property in their compositions. Anyone was free to alter or adapt

existing songs, to break them up or to combine them. We are fortunate enough to possess different versions of folk-songs illustrating the different stages of growth. For instance, there is a long narrative ballad on the Battle of Sempach, between the Swiss and the Austrians, which can be traced back to two short songs—one, a piece of rough humour, describing how the Swiss priests would treat their Austrian penitents at confession, by laying steel maces on their heads, the other an account of a fight between the Swiss Bull and the Austrian Lion.

Again, we find twelve lines which begin as a pure lyric in this form:

"'Ach Elslein, liebes Elselein,
Wie gern wär ich bei dir!
So sein zwei tiefe wasser
Wol zwischen dir und mir.'

'Das bringt mir grossen schmerzen,
Herzallerliebster gsell!
Red ich von ganzem herzen,
Habs für gross ungesell!'

'Hoff, zeit werd es wol enden,
Hoff, glück werd kummen drein,
Sich in als guts verwenden,
Herzliebstes Elselein!'"

———

"'Ah, Elsie, dearest Elsie,
With thee were I full fain,
But now two mighty waters
Lie wide betwixt us twain.'

'Ill luck it is to part now,
Thou dearest lad I know.
I say with all my heart now
It brings me bitter woe.'

'Hope, Time will see it ended,
Good Luck will soon appear,
And all our woes be mended,
My Elsie, dearest dear!'"

Then this develops into a romantic ballad of two lovers, who played the parts of Hero and Leander.

If we classify the Volkslied by subject, we find that the narrative poems, whether historical or romantic, though good, are not surpassingly good. Sir Walter Scott's translations of "The Battle of Sempach" and "The Noble Moringer" give the English reader rather too favourable an impression of their quality. They do not equal the best of the English and Scottish historical and romantic ballads. Narrative or descriptive poetry require greater skill than the German folk-singer could command. Reflective poetry the folk-singers hardly attempt. Their comments (which are sparing) are delightfully naïve. "O Parting," runs one verse, "O Parting, O Parting, whoever invented parting, brought unspeakable sorrow to many a young heart." Where the folk-singers are at their best is in love-poetry, the simple expression of strong human emotion.

Probably the love-song is the oldest form of popular poetry. Its excellence cannot be ascribed to any particular author, since these poems appear to have been handled and rehandled by different singers in the same way as the other folk-songs. Thus the idea expressed in the little scrap of song in the girl's letter is elaborated in a ballad (as old as

the fifteenth century) in dialogue form. The first two verses are:

" ' Bei meines bulen haupte
Da steht ein güldner schrein,
Darinn da leit verschlossen
Das junge herze mein ;
Wolt got, ich het den schlüssel,
Ich würf in in den Rein !
Wär ich bei meinem bulen,
Wie möcht mir bass gesein ! '

' Bei meines bulen fussen
Da fleusst ein brünnlein kalt,
Und wer des brünnleins trinket,
Der jungt und wird nicht alt ;
Ich hab des brünnleins trunken
So manchen stolzen trunk,
Vil liber wolt ich küssen
Meins bulen roten mund.' "

She " ' My true love's head is resting
Upon a golden shrine,
Wherein is fast imprisoned
All this young heart of mine.
O, if the key were given
To me, I should not fear
To throw it far in Rhinestream
Were I but with my dear ! '

He ' Where my love's feet are resting
There runs a streamlet cold,
Who will but drink that water
May nevermore grow old.
And often at that fountain
To drink have I been fain,
But fainer now of kissing
My love's red lips again ! ' "

In the third verse is a charmingly simple remark by the lady. She will give her lover, not sweet spices, but bitter cloves, that he may not forget her.

Again, we have the nucleus of a ballad in the lines:

" Dort hoch auf jenem berge
Da get ein mülerad,
Das malet nichts denn liebe
Die nacht biss an den tag ;
Die müle ist zerbrochen,
Die liebe hat ein end,
So gsegen dich got, mein feines lieb !
Jez fahr ich ins ellend."

" Far up on yonder mountain
A millwheel turns amain,
And nought but love is grinding
From night till dawn again.
But now the wheel is broken,
An end must come to love ;
Then fare thee well, my dainty dear,
Now far afield I rove."

Another scrap of song tells of three maidens in a tower, and a later balladist has combined both songs and substituted a less cynical ending, with the following result:

" Da droben auf jenem Berge,
Da steht ein hohes Haus,
Da schauen ja alle Frühmorgen
Drei schöne Jungfrauen heraus.

Die eine, die heisset Susanne,
Die andere Anne Marei ;
Die dritte, die tu' ich nicht nennen,
Weil sie es mein eigen soll sein.

Da drunten im tiefen Tale
Da treibet das Wasser ein Rad ;
Mich aber, mich treibet die Liebe
Vom Morgen bis Abend spät.

Das Mühlrad ist zerbrochen,
Die Liebe hat noch kein End' ;
Und wenn zwei Verliebte tun scheiden,
So reichen sie einander die Händ' ! "

" High up on yonder mountain
There stands a lofty tower,
And every morn three maidens
Look outward from their bower.

And one is called Susanna,
And one is Anne Marie,
The third—but none shall name her,
My own, my own is she.

The stream in yonder valley
Drives a great wheel amain,
So love and longing drive me
From dawn till dark again.

Our love shall last for ever
Though broken is the mill.
When lovers true are parted
Their hands they stretch out still."

Here the fusion is complete. It is not so perfect in the following example, where the first verse has been recovered independently of the second and third. These two verses are clearly a dialogue between two girls in the harvest field.

" Ich hort ein sichellin rauschen,
Wohl rauschen durch das korn,
Ich hort ein feine magt klagen :
Sie het ir lieb verlorn.

' La rauschen, lieb, la rauschen !
Ich acht nit wie es ge ;
Ich hab' mir ein bulen erworben
In feiel und grünen kle.'

' Hast du ein bulen erworben
In feiel und grünen kle,
So ste ich hie alleine,
Tut meinem herzen we.' "

" I heard a sickle sweeping
A-sweeping through the corn,
I heard a fair maid weeping
That she was left forlorn.

' The sickle may sweep over,
I care not how it go,
Since I have found my lover
In meads where violets blow.'

' Where violets blow 'mid clover.
But I make heavy moan,
For thou hast found thy lover
And I go birdalone.' "

In some cases the later additions and alterations are by no means improvements. This poem, found in a fifteenth-century manuscript, was apparently well known, for many adaptations of it

exist, but they lose the passionate appeal of the earlier version :

" Es ist ein schnee gefallen
Und es ist doch nit zeit :
Ich kann nit weiter fahren
Der weg ist mir verschneit.

Mein haus hat keinen gibel,
Es ist mir worden alt,
Zerbrochen sind die rigel,
Mein stübelein ist mir kalt.

Ach lieb, lass dichs erbarmen,
Dass ich so elend bin,
Und schleuss mich in dein arme :
So fert der winter hin."

" A heavy snow has fallen
Before the winter tide,
I cannot take the way that runs
Through drifts so deep and wide.

My gable walls are broken
My house is over-old,
No lock may bar the bitter wind
That makes my chamber cold.

Love, let thy pity find me
So wretched and alone,
If thou wilt hold me in thine arms
The winter will be gone."

Two more examples may be given. Both are exceptional—one by its dramatic power and the

other by its pictorial quality. They are probably among the later folk-songs—possibly as late as the eighteenth century.

" O Strassburg, O Strassburg,
Du wunderschöne Stadt,
Darinnen liegt begraben
So mannicher Soldat.

So mancher und schöner
Auch tapferer Soldat,
Der Vater und lieb Mutter
Böslich verlassen hat.

Verlassen, verlassen,
Es kann nicht anders sein !
Zu Strassburg, ja zu Strassburg
Soldaten müssen sein.

Der Vater, die Mutter,
Die gingen vor's Hauptmanns Haus :
' Ach Hauptmann, lieber Herr Hauptmann,
Gebt mir meinen Sohn heraus ! '

' Euren Sohn kann ich nicht geben
Für noch so vieles Geld,
Euer Sohn, der muss marschieren
Ins weit und breite Feld.

Ins weite, ins breite,
Allvorwärts vor den Feind,
Wenngleich sein schwarzbraun Mädchen
So bitter um ihn weint.'

Sie weinet, sie greinet,
Sie klaget gar zu sehr :
'Ade, mein herzig Schätzchen,
Ich seh' dich nimmermehr !' "

" O Strasburg, O Strasburg,
Yon town is unco fair,
But mony and mony a sodger
Is lying buried there.

Sae mony and bonnie
A sodger young and braw
Frae's faither and his mither
In anger speeds awa'.

Forsaking, forsaking,
Ay, he will merch wha maun,
To Strasburg, to Strasburg
Is ilka sodger gaun.

His faither, his mither,
Bespak the captain fain,
' O captain, noble captain,
Gie us oor lad again.'

' I'll never yield your laddie
For a' your gowd and fee
The lad is boune and merches
Far in the field wi' me,

The fair field, the sair field,
And aye forenenst the foe,
Gin e'en his broon-haired lassie
Is greetin' for her jo.'

And crying and sighing,
Lamenting unco sair,
She ca's ' O fare ye weel, lad,
I'll see your face nae mair.' "

" Ich hab' die Nacht geträumet
Wohl einen schweren Traum ;
Es wuchs in meinem Garten
Ein Rosmarienbaum.

Ein Kirchhof war der Garten,
Ein Blumenbeet das Grab,
Und von dem grünen Baume
Fiel Kron' und Blüte ab.

Die Blüten tät ich sammeln
In einen goldnen Krug ;
Der fiel mir aus den Händen,
Dass er in Stücke schlug.

Draus sah ich Perlen rinnen
Und Tröpflein rosenrot.
Was mag der Traum bedeuten ?
Ach Liebster, bist du tot ? "

" Yestreen as I lay dreaming
An ill dream came to me,
There grew within my garden
A bush of rosemary.

A churchyard was the garden,
Graves stood where flowers had grown,
And from each tree the blossom
And bud fell fast adown.

Each leaf that fell I gathered
Within a bowl of gold,
Which, as I held it, slipped and brake
In sunder on the mould.

And pearls thereout came running
And rubies rosy red.
What may my dream betoken ?
O Love, if thou wert dead ! "

These specimens may, without any detailed analysis, give some idea of the lyrical quality of the German folk-songs.

Something should be said of the metre in which they are written, as this has a special historical and literary interest. The standard line of Old High German heroic poetry was based on alliteration and accent—containing either four or six accented syllables and an indefinite number of unaccented ones. It had a very definite break about the middle. In Middle High German poetry alliteration was given up, rhyme was introduced, and a four-lined stanza came into use—the so-called " Hildebrand " strophe, the Kürenberg strophe, and the Nibelungen Lied strophe, all varying in details, but all based on a line with six accented and an indefinite number of unaccented syllables and a break in the middle. Kürenberg's Falcon poem and Walther's meditations on the Crusade are written in this measure. The nearest parallel in modern verse to the line is this:

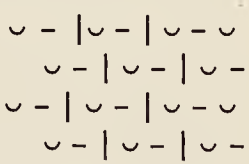
$$\breve{} - | \breve{} - | \breve{} - \breve{} \,||\, \breve{} - | \breve{} - | \breve{} -$$

the syllable just before the break being usually unaccented, and I have followed modern German

renderings of these poems in adopting this line. But it is only an approximation to the older form, which did not take account of the number of unaccented syllables. However, in two important respects it follows the old form—in the central break and in the practice of placing an unaccented syllable before the break.

The counting of syllables was introduced by the Meistersingers, and the line tended to become, to modern ideas, more regular.

Meanwhile the folk-singers handled it in their own way. They broke the long line in two, so that a couplet was converted into a four-lined stanza of this form:



the second and fourth lines rhyming. Then the first and third lines were made to rhyme as well, and as there was an unaccented syllable at the end of each of these lines the rhymes had to be double. This is the main, though not the only metrical form used by the folk-singers.

This process is similar to what happened in England, where the old fourteen-syllabled line became the ballad measure with lines of eight and six syllables alternately. But there is this peculiarity about the German measure, that it does not (like the English) consist of a succession of iambic feet. An amphibrach is substituted for an iambus at the end of the first and third lines, or, to put it more simply, the first and third lines have an extra

unaccented syllable at the end. The difference which this makes in the melody and variety of the measure is most surprising. In these respects this stanza surpasses the English ballad verse and it has remained one of the favourite lyric measures in German till the present day.

Of course the folk-singers were not prosodists. What kept them right was that their poems were sung and a new song had to fit an old tune. For the same reason the fifteenth-century balladists in England composed melodious verses, while the contemporary poets seem to have had no conception of verse rhythm at all.

(II) FROM HUTTEN TO KLOPSTOCK

Folk-song was in a very flourishing state in the early sixteenth century, when the Reformation began. Luther did not set such an impress on German poetry as on German prose, but he knew and loved folk-song and he appreciated, as few scholars of his time did, the native vigour of the popular speech of Germany. The hymns which he composed for the Reformed Church are closely akin to folk-poetry in spirit as in style. Carlyle's rendering of his best known hymn, "A good stronghold our God is still," is too familiar to need quotation. Some forty years ago, when the Social-Democratic Party in Germany was subjected to severe restrictions and Socialist songs could not be sung in public, Luther's hymn was found to be a very satisfactory substitute. So after more than three hundred years it was a real folk-song.

Other propagandists followed Luther's example. If a political song was to win the ear of the people, it must imitate the folk-song. Thus that gallant but unsuccessful fighter Ulrich von Hutten (1488–1523), though a classical scholar, made his appeal to the German people in the form of a popular song. Hutten's attempts to reform the constitution in Church and State had failed ; he was forced to flee, and took refuge in Switzerland, where he wrote this manifesto :

" Ich habs gewagt mit sinnen
Und trag des noch kein reu.
Mag ich nit dran gewinnen,
Noch muss man spüren treu.
Darmit ich mein :
Nit eim allein,
Wenn man es wolt erkennen,
Dem land zu gut,
Wie wol man tut
Ein pfaffenfeint mich nennen.

Da lass ich jeden liegen
Und reden was er wil.
Het warheit ich geschwiegen,
Mir weren hulder vil.
Nun hab ichs gesagt.
Bin drumb verjagt,
Das klag ich allen frummen,
Wie wol noch ich
Nit weiter fleich,
Villeicht werd wider kummen.

Umb gnad wil ich nit bitten,
Dieweil ich bin on schult.
Ich het das recht gelitten,
So hindert ungedult,
Dass man mich nit
Nach altem sit
Zu ghör hat kummen lassen.
Villeicht wils Got,
Und zwingt sie not,
Zu handeln diser massen.

Nun ist oft diser gleichen
Geschehen auch hievor,
Dass einer von den reichen
Ein gutes spil verlor.

Oft grosser flam
Von fünklin kam.
Wer weiss, ob ichs werd rechen !
Stat schon im lauf,
So setz ich drauf,
Muss gan oder brechen !

. . . .

Ob dann mir nach tut denken
Der kurtisanen list,
Ein herz lasst sich nit krenken,
Das rechter meinung ist.
Ich weiss noch vil,
Wöln auch ins spil
Und soltens drüber sterben.
Auf, landsknecht gut
Und reuters mut,
Lasst Hutten nit verderben ! "

" 'Twas no uncounselled daring,
The deed I ne'er will rue,
For gain or loss uncaring
A man must aye be true,
Not to a Throne
Nor one alone,
Such troth I bear to no man ;
But, serving leal
The commonweal,
To Pope and Priest a foeman.

Let every idle prater
Belie me as he will,
Had I to Truth been traitor
Men would adore me still.
For her cause sent
To banishment
To pious folk bewailing ;

Yet hence will I
No further fly
Perchance return prevailing.

All guiltless, I disdainèd
For pardon once to plead,
Nor 'gainst the law complainèd
My foes refused to heed.
To me in spite
Of ancient right
They scorned to grant a hearing ;
This course, maybe
Necessity
So madly set them steering.

For in no other fashion
It often chanced before
That princes in their passion
Have lost the game and more,
One spark became
A mighty flame,
My wrongs may yet be wroken.
The hunt's afoot
And I'll stand to 't,
Win through or else be broken.

. . . .

Though courtiers misconceive me
And practise all their art,
Their plots will never grieve me,
I bear an honest heart.
Some I could name
Will join the game
The cause to death will cherish ;
Up, spearman wight
And gallant knight,
Ere Hutten's doomed to perish! "

Here, in spite of the similarity in style, Hutten has moved farther from the folk-song tradition than Luther. Luther says "we" in his hymn, not "I"; Hutten's song is a personal lyric.

Had the German lyric in the seventeenth century developed in such a way out of the folk-song, its course might have been more successful, but for the most part the poets had other aspirations. The hymn-writers indeed maintained the old traditions, for they, like Luther and Hutten, wished to reach the people, and by choice or instinct used the language, style, and melody to which the people were accustomed. The two most outstanding were Paul Gerhardt (1607–76), a Protestant, and Friedrich von Spee (1591–1635), a Jesuit. Two of Gerhardt's hymns—"O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden" and "Befiehl' du deine Wege"—are widely known by translation. But the hymn-book versions of the former hardly reproduce the passion and force of:

"O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden :
Voll Schmerz und voller Hohn,
O Haupt zum Spott gebunden
Mit einer Dornenkron !
O Haupt, sonst schön gezieret
Mit höchster Ehr und Zier
Jetzt aber hoch schimpfieret
Gegrüsset seist du mir."

"O Bleeding Head, now bearing
Sore wounds and bitter scorn ;
O Head, in mockery wearing
A crown of piercing thorn ;

Once high in glory raisèd,
And decked with honour due,
But now in shame abasèd,
I give Thee greeting true."

Both Gerhardt and Spee were men of whom their age was not worthy. It was part of Spee's duty to accompany condemned criminals to execution. Once he was asked why his hair was white, though he was not yet forty. Because, he replied, he had attended two hundred witches to the stake, not one of whom was guilty. And again, speaking of the use of torture to extract confessions, he said: "I should lie under torture as the saints lied." He died of fever, caught while attending to the sick and wounded during the siege of Treves.

Spee brings into his religious poetry the passion of the love poems of the folk-singers. Here are three stanzas from a long mystical poem on the relations between Christ and the soul :

" Das Meer wann's hebt ohn Massen,
Mag's doch nit lang bestahn,
Pflegt bald sich niederlassen,
Nimmt Ruh begierlich an.

Warumb thut mich denn plagen
Die Lieb ohn Unterlass,
Dass nie kein Punkt mag sagen,
Wann ich ohn Schmerzen was ?

Die Lieb mich setzt in Leiden,
O Jesu, Liebster mein,
Wer will, von dir gescheiden
Nit stets in Qualen sein ? "

" The sea obeys no measure,
But soon its storms are past,
For, changing quick its pleasure,
'Tis fain of peace at last.

And why should love assail me
With never-ceasing pain,
That nothing may avail me
A moment's ease to gain ?

For love alone I languish,
Turn, dearest Lord, to me,
Who will not lie in anguish
If parted once from Thee ? "

Another notable hymn-writer of this period was Johann Scheffler, known in literature as Angelus Silesius (1624–77). Scheffler's hymns, though still remembered, are less remarkable than his religious epigrams, which embody with startling vigour and clearness the teaching of the Mystics. Lines like

" Wird Christus tausendmal zu Bethlehem geboren
Und nicht in dir ; du bleibst noch ewiglich verloren."

" Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem were born
If not in thee, then still thou art eternally forlorn."

or

" Nicht du bist in dem Ort, der Ort der ist in dir ;
Wirfst du ihn aus, so steht die Ewigkeit schon hier."

" Thou art not set in Space, but Space is set in thee ;
If thou wilt cast it out, thou hast Eternity."

or

" Ich bin so gross als Gott, er ist als ich so klein ;
Er kann nicht über mich, ich unter ihm nicht sein."

" God is as small as I, I am as great as He ;
I am not under Him, He is not over me."

have exerted a compelling influence on poets and thinkers of later ages.

Akin to the hymn-writers and, like them, influenced by folk-poetry, was Simon Dach (1605–59), whose " Annie of Tharaw " is well known in Longfellow's translation. Another of Dach's poems has won the affection of generations of readers by that simple manliness which is one of the pleasantest features of German poetry——much pleasanter to foreigners than that equally characteristic tearful sentimentality from which even Goethe is not free.

The opening stanza runs:

" Der Mensch hat nichts so eigen,
So wohl steht ihm nichts an,
Als dass er Treu erzeigen
Und Freundschaft halten kann ;
Wenn er mit seines Gleichen
Soll treten in ein Band,
Verspricht sich, nicht zu weichen
Mit Herzen, Mund und Hand."

" Nought unto man pertaining
Becomes him so at last
As when, his faith maintaining,
He holds to friendship fast.
When man and mate united
In fellowship will stand
And lasting troth is plighted
With tongue and heart and hand."

The seventeenth-century poets, whose aims were more purely literary than those of the hymn-writers, neglected the folk-song. With more reason they thought that nothing was to be gained by following the Meistersingers, whose verses had lapsed into doggerel. They looked about for fresh models and found them in the poetry of France and Italy.

The first of these writers was Martin Opitz (1597–1639), who had in his own day a great reputation, and was called for long afterwards the Father of German Poetry. Opitz exercised an influence on German poetry which was quite out of proportion to his very moderate talents. He was more important as a critic than a poet. Even as a critic he was not very profound or original, but his views were correct and were expressed at the right moment. He was much impressed by the work which Ronsard and the poets of the Pléiade had done in France in the sixteenth century, and particularly by Ronsard's defence of the French language as a literary medium. Could he not do a similar service for German ? There was a real danger that German would cease to be regarded as a literary language; in the following century Frederick the Great spoke and wrote in French, using German as an Anglo-Indian uses Hindustani. Opitz, a scholar familiar with the literature not only of Greece and Rome, but of France, Italy, and even to some extent of England (for he was an admirer of Sir Philip Sidney's work), insisted that German was capable of producing poetry fit to rank with the best in other tongues.

In dealing with the important question of prosody, he pointed out very truly that in German metre was based on accent, not, as in Latin and

Greek, on quantity, and that it was not enough to count the syllables in a line (as the latest Meistersingers had done) without regard to accent. He went too far in saying that there were only two feet in German poetry, the iambus and the trochee. Still, on the vital distinction between German and classical poetry on the one hand and the degenerate verse of the Meistersingers on the other, he was absolutely right.

His own poetry was just good enough to give point and weight to his theories. He was not Ronsard's equal by any means, and the best known of his lyrics is an imitation of one of Ronsard's. When he tries to be original, he slips very easily into bathos and platitude, as may be seen from the following extracts from a poem on the miseries of war. With the Thirty Years War not half over, the German people never needed comfort more, and Opitz took care that his countrymen were at any rate well supplied with the consolations of philosophy.

" Der Feind hat dir dein Schloss, dein Haus hinweg gerissen
Fleuch in der Mannheit Burg, die wird er nicht beschiessen.

. . . . . .

Er hat den Acker dir verheeret weit und breit :
Der Acker des Gemüths trägt auch bei Winterszeit.
Er hat die Tochter Dir durch Not und Zwang geschändet :
Gut, dass er dies nur nicht mit ihrer Gunst vollendet.
Er hat dein Weib erwürgt ; viel wünschen ihnen das,
Er hat dein Kind entleibt ; der Mensch ist Heu und Gras.

. . . . . .

Er hat dein Geld geraubt ; behalt du nur den Muth :
Er hat dich selbst verwundt : die Tugend giebt kein Blut.

. . . . . .

Was wollen wir auch viel der Jugend Tod beklagen ?
Der Leib beschwert uns nur, mit dem wir uns hier tragen.
Jetzt thut das Haupt uns weh, jetzt liegt es um die Brust
Jetzt haben wir zu Trank und Speisen keine Lust,
Bald hat man zu viel Blut, bald fallen scharfe Flüsse,
Bald kocht der Magen nicht, bald schwellen uns die Füsse."

" The foe thy house has ta'en, thy castle now invading ;
Flee thou to Manhood's Tower ; that fears no cannonading.

. . . . . .

If he thy fertile fields has wasted far and wide
The fields of courage bear good crops in winter-tide.
If he thy daughter dear by force has brought to shame,
'Tis well that when the deed was done she bore no blame.
Thy wife is murdered too ; but some wish theirs away ;
And he has slain thy child ; man is but grass and hay.

. . . . . .

He robs thee of thy purse ; keep thou a stalwart mood.
He wounded thine own self, but Virtue lost no blood.

. . . . . .

And why should we the death of youth lament despairing ?
The body burdens us which here we must be bearing,
For now the head is sore, and now it is the breast
And now we cannot eat nor drink at all with zest.
This man has too much blood, and that a flux is draining,
Now the digestion fails and now the feet are paining."

This passage illustrates Opitz's metrical limitations as well. In German, as in English, the alexandrine metre with a regular break after the sixth syllable soon becomes tedious. Even the addition of an unaccented syllable at the end of the line does not lighten it. Nor, if the lines were broken in two, as the old long line had been, and fitted with internal rhymes, would the monotony disappear. Nothing could show more clearly how fortunate or how wise were the earlier poets who chose a line of thirteen syllables with an unaccented syllable in the middle and based the folk-song measure on such a line.

As a poet Opitz was surpassed by his younger contemporary Paul Fleming (1609–40). Fleming had a happier and more adventurous life than most literary men of his time. After studying at Leipzig, where he made the acquaintance of Opitz, he joined the staff of an embassy sent by the Duke of Holstein through Russia to Persia. On his return he settled at Reval, and a bright career seemed to be opening before him, when, stricken by sudden illness, he died at the age of 31.

Fleming wrote much verse in alexandrines, filled with classical allusions in the best manner of Opitz, but in his Odes he succeeded in throwing off the trammels of his school and giving unconstrained expression to a frank and charming personality. Some of these lyrics are not unlike those of the English Cavalier poets. Some of his sonnets (written, like those of Opitz, in alexandrines) are very striking—one, his own epitaph, composed three days before his death, reflects nothing but gladness and pride and courage in face of the doom descending on him.

" Ich war an Kunst und Gut und Stande gross und reich,
Des Glückes lieber Sohn, von Eltern guter Ehren,
Frei. Meine. Konnte mich aus meinen Mitteln nähren,
Mein Schall floh überweit, kein Landsmann sang mir gleich.
Von Reisen hochgepreist, für keine Mühe bleich,
Jung, wachsam, unbesorgt. Man wird mich nennen hören,
Bis dass die letzte Glut dies alles wird verstören.
Dies, deutsche Klarien, dies Ganze dank ich euch.
Verzeiht mir's, bin ich's wert, Gott, Vater, Liebste, Freunde.
Ich sag euch gute Nacht und trete willig ab.
Sonst alles ist getan bis an das schwarze Grab.
Was frei dem Tode steht, das tu er seinem Feinde !
Was bin ich viel besorgt, den Odem auf zu geben ?
An mir ist minder nichts das lebet als mein Leben."

" Honour and Wealth and Art were mine abundantly,
Dame Fortune's darling son. Of gentle sires I came,
No stranger's bread I ate. Free and my own. My fame
Went wide. In German lands no poet sang like me.
For travel far renowned. Staunch in adversity,
Young, watchful, unperplexed. And men shall hear my name
Till that and all else pass in one devouring flame.
For this, O German Muse, I bear my thanks to thee.
Your pardon where I erred, God, Father, Dearest Woman,
Friends! 'tis a long good night, but willing I resign,
All's done ; yea, ready stands the grave that shall be mine,
Let Death do all he may to his unflinching foeman.
Though now my latest breath I yield, shall I go grieving?
My life is but the least that still in me is living."

Neither Opitz nor Fleming survived the Thirty Years War, which wrought unspeakable havoc, not

only on literature, but on German civilization. The recovery was slow; the later seventeenth-century writers who followed Italian models were remarkable rather for endeavour than for achievement. Not till Johann Christian Günther (1695–1723) do we find a poet of real mark, a poet whom Goethe singled out for special praise. For Günther life was unhappy and death came too soon. Like his contemporaries, he was fond of addressing artificial poems to real or imaginary ladies with classical names, but again and again the power and passion melt the frigid style in flame, as in the opening verses of his "Leavetaking."

"Schweig' du doch nur, du Hälfte meiner Brust!
Denn was du weinst, ist Blut aus meinem Herzen,
Ich taumle so und hab' an nichts mehr Lust,
Als an der Angst und den getreuen Schmerzen,
Womit der Stern, der unsre Liebe trennt,
Die Augen brennt.

Die Zärtlichkeit des innerlichen Qual
Erlaubt mir kaum, ein ganzes Wort zu machen.
Was dem geschieht, um welchen Keil und Strahl
Bei heisser Luft in weitem Felde krachen,
Geschieht auch mir durch dieses Donnerwort;
Nun muss ich fort. . . .

Wohin ich geh', begleitet mich dein Bild,
Kein fremder Zug wird mir den Schatz entreissen
Es macht mich treu und ist ein Hoffnungsschild
Wenn Neid und Not Verfolgungssteine schmeissen
Bis dass die Hand die uns hier Dörner flicht
Die Myrten bricht."

" Be still, be still, for half my life art thou.
If thou wilt weep, my heart must fall a-bleeding,
I reel unmanned and overmastered now
Nought save the pangs of true devotion heeding,
Wherewith the Star that longs our love to part
Burns eye and heart.

So deep and tender is my inward woe
For utterance on broken words depending—
As one, unsheltered, sees the ground below
Cleft by a thunderbolt in flame descending
I stand, and still the doom is thundered on ;
I must be gone.

Where'er I go, thy image still abides,
No new distraction robs me of my treasure,
It keeps me true—a shield of hope that hides
From Need and Envy stoning in displeasure,
Till in the Hand that thorns for us entwines
The myrtle shines."

The next name of interest is that of Friedrich von Hagedorn (1708–54). Hagedorn spent some time in London as secretary of the Danish Embassy, and made a study of English poetry. He was attracted by the work of Pope and Prior, as well as by that of La Fontaine and the French writers of *vers de société*. With Hagedorn a new quality appears in German poetry—elegance.

The men of the eighteenth century showed a distinct advance on those of the seventeenth, and a really considerable poet arose in Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724–1803), though Klopstock was not so great as his contemporaries thought him. He adopted or invented unrhymed lyrical measures in imitation of the classical poets, and he affected a

certain classic grace and dignity. The following is one of his best-known pieces:

Die frühen Gräber

" Willkommen, o silberner Mond,
Schöner, stiller Gefährt' der Nacht !
Du entfliehst ? Eile nicht, bleib, Gedankenfreund !
Sehet, er bleibt, das Gewölk wallte nur hin.

Des Maies Erwachen ist nur
Schöner noch wie die Sommernacht,
Wenn ihm Tau, hell wie Licht, aus der Locke träuft,
Und zu dem Hügel herauf rötlich er kommt.

Ihr Edleren, ach es bewächst
Eure Male schon ernstes Moos !
O wie war glücklich ich, als ich noch mit euch
Sahe sich röten den Tag, schimmern die Nacht ! "

The Early Graves

" O welcome, thou silvery moon,[1]
Lovely, silent, the bride of night
Thou art gone—Speed not, but stay, O friend of thought !
Nay, she abides ; 'twas a cloud passed overhead.

The Maytime's awakening alone
Gleams more fair than the summer night,
From her locks radiant falls the dew adown,
Upwards o'er mountains she climbs, rising she glows.

But, noble ones, now overgrown,
Your memorials lonely stand.
I was blest, blest when with you I once could see
Rising the reddening dawn, gleaming the night."

[1] The Moon is masculine in German, but most frequently feminine in English verse.

But perhaps the closest analogy of Klopstock's work at his highest is with Collins' Ode to Evening.

" If aught of oaten stop or pastoral song
May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy modest ear
Like thy own solemn springs
Thy springs and dying gales."

THE GREAT AGE

(I) GOETHE, SCHILLER, AND HÖLDERLIN

Long before Klopstock died, he was overshadowed by a younger man, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832). Goethe is so much greater than any of his predecessors that they have in comparison almost passed out of men's minds. An anthology of seventeenth and eighteenth century poetry was recently published in Germany under the significant title *Die Vergessenen* (*The Forgotten*). Carlyle said that Goethe's work dawned mysterious on a world that hoped not for it. This is true, but it is also true that the earlier poets had prepared his way. His work was the fulfilment of the brightest promise in Günther's, Hagedorn's, and Klopstock's, and not of theirs only, but of that of the folk-poets and the mediæval singers. The great critic Herder had already made a study of German mediæval literature and of the folk-poetry of other European countries, when in 1770 Goethe, who had published a volume of no outstanding promise or performance, went to study at Strasburg and came under Herder's influence. His next poems showed a remarkable advance in freshness and vigour, and the credit must be divided between Herder and Fräulein Frederike Brion, one of the many ladies who in turn inspired the poet.

Goethe was what Schiller called a "naïve" poet—that is, his poems were the direct result of

some impulse or emotion. At the same time he was a "sentimental," a reflective, or philosophical poet. Then he had a wonderful power of assimilating the culture of his own and other countries and turning it to account, without in the least losing his own individuality. He was familiar with English, French, Italian, and classical literature, and in his old age he drew inspiration from the East. It is particularly interesting to see how he absorbs the spirit of the singers of his own land and transcends their limitations. Gretchen's song in *Faust*, "Meine Ruh ist hin," is almost pure folk-song:

"Meine Ruh ist hin
Mein Herz ist schwer
Ich finde sie nimmer
Und nimmermehr."

It translates itself into Broad Scots:

"My rest is gane
My heart is sair,
I'll never find it
Aye, nevermair."

Then the ballad of "The King in Thule" is akin to folk-song, but has a certain pictorial quality and moves towards a climax with greater skill than the folk-poets had done:

"Es war ein König in Thule
Gar treu bis an das Grab,
Dem sterbend seine Buhle
Einen goldnen Becher gab.

Es ging ihm nichts darüber,
Er leert' ihn jeden Schmaus ;
Die Augen gingen ihm über,
So oft er trank daraus.

Und als er kam zu sterben,
Zählt' er seine Städt' im Reich,
Gönnt' alles seinem Erben,
Den Becher nicht zugleich.

Er sass beim Königsmahle
Die Ritter um ihn her,
Auf hohem Vätersaale
Dort auf dem Schloss am Meer.

Dort stand der alte Zecher,
Trank letzte Lebensglut
Und warf den heil'gen Becher
Hinunter in die Flut.

Er sah ihn stürzen, trinken
Und sinken tief ins Meer.
Die Augen täten ihm sinken ;
Trank nie einen Tropfen mehr."

" A king in Thule lying
Was leal unto the grave ;
To him his lady, dying,
A golden goblet gave.

No dearer treasure knowing
At feasts he drained the cup,
His eyes were overflowing
Whene'er he raised it up.

And when his life was closing,
His kingdom's wealth he told,
All to his heir disposing,
All, save the cup of gold.

Mid knights and nobles loyal
He feasted solemnly,
Throned in his castle royal
His castle by the sea.

Then rose that reveller hoary
And drank life's latest glow,
And threw the cup of glory
Into the waves below.

He saw it falling, drinking
Deep of the whelming main,
His eyes were sinking, sinking,
He never drank again."

In Mignon's most famous song (from *Wilhelm Meister*) we are quite beyond what any folk-singer ever attempted. Folk-poets were sensitive to natural beauty and the spirit of place. One of them might sing, "O Strassburg, O Strassburg, Du wunderschöne Stadt," and another "Innsbruck, ich muss dich lassen" (O Innsbruck, I must leave thee), but they cannot call up a picture of Strasburg or Innsbruck. In this poem Goethe, without the least effort, evokes the charm of Italy.

"Kennst du das Land, wo die Zitronen blühn,
Im dunkeln Laub die Gold-Orangen glühn,
Ein sanfter Wind vom blauen Himmel weht,
Die Myrte still und hoch der Lorbeer steht?
Kennst du es wohl? Dahin! Dahin
Möcht' ich mit dir, o mein Geliebter, ziehn.

Kennst du das Haus ? Auf Säulen ruht sein Dach,
Es glänzt der Saal, es schimmert das Gemach,
Und Marmorbilder stehn und sehn mich an :
Was hat man dir, du armes Kind, getan ?
Kennst du es wohl ? Dahin ! Dahin
Möcht' ich mit dir, o mein Beschützer, ziehn.

Kennst du den Berg und seinen Wolkensteg ?
Das Maultier sucht im Nebel seinen Weg ;
In Höhlen wohnt der Drachen alte Brut ;
Es stürzt der Fels und über ihn die Flut.
Kennst du ihn wohl ? Dahin ! Dahin
Geht unser Weg ! O Vater, lass uns ziehn ! "

" Know'st thou the land where citron blossom blows,
Through the dark leaves the golden orange glows,
A gentle wind breathes from the azure sky,
Silent the myrtle stands, the laurel high ?

Know'st thou it well ?
O there, O there,
Would I with thee, mine own beloved, fare !

Know'st thou the house, the roof on pillars borne,
The gleaming hall, the chamber bright as morn
Where marble figures stand agaze at me,
' Thou hapless child, what have they done to thee ? '
Know'st thou it well ?
O there, O there,
Would I with thee, mine own protector, fare.

Know'st thou the peak, the clouded pass on high,
Where, through the mist, the mule climbs warily,
In caverns dwell the dragons' ancient brood
Sheer falls the cliff and over it the flood ?
Know'st thou it well ?
O there, O there,
Yonder our path, yonder, O father, fare ! "

Another of the *Wilhelm Meister* poems, the Harper's song, is to English readers the most familiar example in one version or another of Goethe's reflective poetry :

" Wer nie sein Brot mit Tränen ass,
Wer nie die kummervollen Nächte
Auf seinem Bette weinend sass,
Der kennt euch nicht, ihr himmlischen Mächte.

Ihr führt ins Leben uns hinein,
Ihr lasst den Armen schuldig werden,
Dann überlasst ihr ihn der Pein
Denn alle Schuld rächt sich auf Erden.

Ihm färbt der Morgensonne Licht
Den reinen Horizont mit Flammen,
Und über seinem schuld'gen Haupte bricht
Das schöne Bild der ganzen Welt zusammen."

" Who ne'er in sorrow ate his bread,
Who ne'er whole nights till dawn from even
Sat, weeping sore, upon his bed
He knows you not, ye Powers of Heaven :

Us ignorant to life Ye sent,
And Man is free to fall. Forsaken,
Ye leave him to his punishment,
Yea, for each sin is vengeance taken.

For him the sunshine of the morn
Flame o'er the pure horizon scatters,
And far above his guilty head forlorn,
The lovely vision of creation shatters."

Klopstock in the " Early Graves " and in other poems had united nature poetry and reflective

poetry, but Klopstock's ode is stiff and cold beside the lines "An den Mond" (To the Moon), in which Goethe voices the feelings which arise in him during a solitary walk by a riverside.

"Füllest wieder Busch und Tal
Still mit Nebelglanz,
Lösest endlich auch einmal
Meine Seele ganz ;

Breitest über mein Gefild
Lindernd deinen Blick,
Wie des Freundes Auge mild
Über mein Geschick.

Jeden Nachklang fühlt mein Herz
Froh—und trüber Zeit,
Wandle zwischen Freud' und Schmerz
In der Einsamkeit.

Fliesse, fliesse, lieber Fluss
Nimmer werd' ich froh ;
So verrauschte Scherz und Kuss
Und die Treue so.

Ich besass es doch einmal,
Was so köstlich ist !
Dass man doch zu seiner Qual
Nimmer es vergisst !

Rausche, Fluss, das Tal entlang,
Ohne Rast und Ruh,
Rausche, flüstre meinem Sang
Melodien zu,

Wenn du in der Winternacht
Wütend überschwillst,
Oder um die Frühlingspracht
Junger Knospen quillst.

Selig, wer sich vor der Welt
Ohne Hass verschliesst,
Einen Freund am Busen hält
Und mit dem geniesst,

Was, von Menschen nicht gewusst
Oder nicht bedacht,
Durch das Labyrinth der Brust
Wandelt in der Nacht."

" Tree and vale with misty light
Flooding silently,
Comest thou again to-night
All my soul to free.

All my life before thee lies ;
Turns thy healing glance,
Like a lover's tender eyes
O'er my evil chance.

Mirth or grief, my heart again
Feels each vanished mood,
Wandering twixt joy and pain
In my solitude.

Flow, belovèd river, flow,
My delight is past,
Mirth and love have fled me so
Faith flowed on as fast.

What was mine in years gone by
Is so precious yet—
'Tis my torment now that I
Never may forget.

Speed, O Stream, the vale along
Heeding rest nor ease,
Whispering unto my song
Rippling melodies,

Whether thou in winter bring
Uncontrollèd floods,
Or in splendour of the spring
Greet the opening buds.

Well for him, who, void of hate
From the world can turn,
Holding to his heart a mate,
Joys with him to learn,

Which by others never guessed,
Hid from thought and sight
Through the mazes of the breast
Wander in the night."

Goethe's wide range of subject is equalled by the range of style. He invented new metres in addition to using old ones, and he attempted no lyric measure over which he did not gain complete mastery. It is almost impossible to illustrate this in English because of the difficulty of reproducing the unrhymed measures, but I have ventured on a rendering of the Song of the Parcæ from "*Iphigenie auf Tauris*" (*Iphigenia in Tauris*).

" Es fürchte die Götter
Das Menschengeschlecht !
Sie halten die Herrschaft
In ewigen Händen
Und können sie brauchen,
Wie's ihnen gefällt.

Der fürchte sie doppelt,
Den je sie erheben !
Auf Klippen und Wolken
Sind Stühle bereitet
Um goldene Tische.

Erhebet ein Zwist sich,
So stürzen die Gäste,
Geschmäht und geschändet,
In nächtliche Tiefen
Und harren vergebens,
Im Finstern gebunden,
Gerechten Gerichtes.

Sie aber, sie bleiben
In ewigen Festen
An goldenen Tischen.
Sie schreiten vom Berge
Zu Bergen hinüber :
Aus Schlünden der Tiefe
Dampft ihnen der Atem
Erstickter Titanen,
Gleich Opfergerüchen,
Ein leichtes Gewölke.

Es wenden die Herrscher
Ihr segnendes Auge
Von ganzen Geschlechtern
Und meiden, im Enkel

Die ehmals geliebten,
Still redenden Züge
Des Ahnherrn zu sehn.

. . .

So sangen die Parzen.
Es horcht der Verbannte
In nächtlichen Höhlen,
Der Alte, die Lieder,
Denkt Kinder und Enkel
Und schüttelt das Haupt."

" O fear the Immortals
Ye children of men !
They hold Their dominion
In hands everlasting
And infinite lordship
They wield as They will.

Let him fear Them doubly
Whom They have exalted !
On cliffs in the heavens
Are seats set in order
Around golden tables.

If discord arises,
The guests are hurled headlong
In shame and derision
To gloomy abysses
And vainly they tarry,
Fast fettered in darkness,
A judgment of justice.

But They, in Their strongholds
Eternal abiding,
Recline at gold tables
Or stride in Their journeys
From mountain to mountain.

From chasms unfathomed,
To Them steaming upward,
The breath of the Titans
Like offerings of incense
Ascends in a vapour.

The Rulers almighty
Avert eyes of blessing
From whole generations ;
The faces of grandsons
Still silently speaking
Of sires once belovèd
They shun to behold.

And thus sang the Parcæ.
The banished one hearkens
In the gloom of his prison,
Remembering his children
And shaking his head."

As Goethe's work is the culmination of what had been done before him, so it furnished a new starting-point for German poetry. His working life extended over sixty years and one generation of younger poets after another rose and flourished in his shadow. When he called himself the liberator of the younger men, he could have justified the claim in many ways. In the lyric his liberating work was in extending the bounds of poetry, in discovering and applying the best of the old traditions, in refusing to be bound by them, and in experimenting fearlessly and successfully.

Unlike Goethe, his great contemporary Friedrich von Schiller (1759–1805) was unaffected by the folk-song. Schiller was by his own definition a "sentimental," not a "naïve" poet. His poetry

was the fruit of reflection—not a simple reaction to experience ; and the struggle to obtain an inner harmony and a wide outlook on Nature and Man was accompanied by a struggle for expression, for only with pain and effort did Schiller beat his music out. When he was at last master of his instrument, he attained a rush and sweep of rhythm never before felt in German poetry—not even in Goethe. Schiller was a poet of ideas and ideals, and the philosophies of his time find an expression in his verse. In his " Ode to Joy," we have the noblest rendering of that enthusiasm for Humanity which heralded, if it did not survive, the French Revolution.

" Freude, schöner Götterfunken,
Tochter aus Elysium,
Wir betreten feuertrunken,
Himmlische, dein Heiligtum.
Deine Zauber binden wieder,
Was die Mode streng geteilt ;
Alle Menschen werden Brüder,
Wo dein sanfter Flügel weilt.

Seid umschlungen, Millionen !
Diesen Kuss der ganzen Welt ;
Brüder—über'm Sternenzelt
Muss ein lieber Vater wohnen.

Wem der grosse Wurf gelungen,
Eines Freundes Freund zu sein,
Wer ein holdes Weib errungen,
Mische seinen Jubel ein !
Ja—wer auch nur eine Seele
Sein nennt auf dem Erdenrund.
Und wer's nie gekonnt, der stehle
Weinend sich aus diesem Bund !

Was den grossen Ring bewohnet,
Huldige der Sympathie !
Zu den Sternen leitet sie,
Wo der Unbekannte thronet.

Freude trinken alle Wesen
An den Brüsten der Natur ;
Alle Guten, alle Bösen,
Folgen ihrer Rosenspur.
Küsse gab sie uns und Reben,
Einen Freund, geprüft im Tod ;
Wollust ward dem Wurm gegeben,
Und der Cherub steht vor Gott.

Ihr stürzt nieder, Millionen ?
Ahnest du den Schöpfer, Welt ?
Such ihn über'm Sternenzelt !
Über Sternen muss er wohnen.

Freude heisst die starke Feder
In der ewigen Natur.
Freude, Freude treibt die Räder
In der grossen Weltenuhr.
Blumen lockt sie aus den Keimen,
Sonnen aus dem Firmament,
Sphären rollt sie in den Räumen,
Die des Sehers Rohr nicht kennt.

Froh, wie seine Sonnen fliegen
Durch des Himmels prächt'gen Plan,
Wandelt, Brüder, euere Bahn,
Freudig, wie ein Held zum Siegen !

Aus der Wahrheit Feuerspiegel
Lächelt sie den Forscher an.
Zu der Tugend steilem Hügel
Leitet sie des Dulders Bahn.

Auf des Glaubens Sonnenberge
Sieht man ihre Fahnen weh'n,
Durch den Riss gesprengter Särge
Sie im Chor der Engel steh'n.

Duldet mutig, Millionen !
Duldet für die bess're Welt !
Droben über'm Sternenzelt
Wird ein grosser Gott belohnen.

Göttern kann man nicht vergelten ;
Schön ist's ihnen gleich zu sein.
Gram und Armut soll sich melden,
Mit den Frohen sich erfreu'n.
Groll und Rache sei vergessen,
Unserm Todfeind sei verzieh'n.
Keine Träne soll ihn pressen,
Keine Reue nage ihn.

Unser Schuldbuch sei vernichtet !
Ausgesöhnt die ganze Welt !
Brüder—über'm Sternenzelt
Richtet Gott, wie wir gerichtet.

. . . . .

Festen Mut in schwerem Leiden,
Hilfe, wo die Unschuld weint,
Ewigkeit geschwornen Eiden,
Wahrheit gegen Freund und Feind
Männerstolz vor Königsthronen,
Brüder, gält' es Gut und Blut—
Dem Verdienste seine Kronen,
Untergang der Lügenbrut !

Schliesst den heil'gen Zirkel dichter,
Schwört bei diesem goldenen Wein,
Dem Gelübde treu zu sein,
Schwört es bei dem Sternenrichter ! "

" Joy, of flame celestial fashioned,
Daughter of Elysium,
By that holy fire impassioned
To thy sanctuary we come.
Thine the spells that reunited
Those estranged by Custom dread,
Every man a brother plighted
Where thy gentle wings are spread.
Millions in our arms we gather,
To the world our kiss be sent !
Past the starry firmament,
Brothers, dwells a loving Father.

Who that height of bliss has provèd
Once a friend of friends to be,
Who has won a maid belovèd
Join us in our jubilee.
Whoso holds a heart in keeping,
One—in all the world—his own—
Who has failed, let him with weeping
From our fellowship begone !
All the mighty globe containeth
Homage to Compassion pay !
To the stars she leads the way
Where, unknown, the Godhead reigneth.

All drink joy from Mother Nature,
All she suckled at her breast,
Good or evil, every creature,
Follows where her foot has pressed.
Love she gave us, passing measure,
One Who true in death abode,
E'en the worm was granted pleasure,
Angels see the face of God.
Fall ye millions, fall before Him,
Is thy Maker, World, unknown ?
Far above the stars His throne
Yonder seek Him and adore Him.

Joy, the spring of all contriving,
In eternal Nature's plan,
Joy set wheels on wheels a-driving
Since earth's horologe began ;
From the bud the blossom winning
Suns from out the sky she drew,
Spheres through boundless ether spinning
Worlds no gazer's science knew.
Gladsome as her suns and glorious
Through the spacious heavens career,
Brothers, so your courses steer
Heroes joyful and victorious.

She from Truth's own mirror shining
Casts on sages glances gay,
Guides the sufferer unrepining
Far up Virtue's steepest way ;
On the hills of Faith all-glorious
Mark her sunlit banners fly,
She, in death's despite, victorious,
Stands with angels in the sky.
Millions, bravely sorrows bearing,
Suffer for a better time !
See, above the starry clime
God a great reward preparing.

Men may never match Immortals ;
Fair it is like Gods to be
Welcome to our joyous portals
Sons of Want and Poverty.
Rancour and resentment leaving,
Be our mortal foe forgiven,
Not a sorrow for his grieving,
Not a tear to mar his heaven !
Pardon every debt ungrudging,
Let all nations be atoned !
God above the stars enthroned
Judges us, as we are judging.

Hearts in direst need unquailing,
Aid to Innocence in woe,
Troth eternally unfailing,
Loyalty to friend and foe !
Fronting kings, a manly spirit,
Though it cost our wealth and blood !
Crowns to nought save noblest merit,
Death to all the Liars' brood !
Close the holy circle. Ever
Swear it by the wine of gold,
Swear these sacred vows to hold,
Swear it by the stars' Lawgiver."

In a calmer mood is " Tekla's Answer." Tekla was the daughter of Wallenstein, the hero of Schiller's trilogy, *Wallenstein*. When her father was murdered and her lover (Max Piccolomini) slain in battle, Tekla's fate was left unrevealed. The English translation is by Matthew Arnold :

" Wo ich sei, und wo mich hingewendet
Als mein flücht'ger Schatten dir entschwebt ?
Hab' ich nicht beschlossen und geendet,
Hab' ich nicht geliebet und gelebt ?

Willst du nach den Nachtigallen fragen,
Die mit seelenvoller Melodie
Dich entzückten in des Lenzes Tagen ?
Nur, so lang sie liebten, waren sie.

Ob ich den Verlorenen gefunden ?
Glaube mir, ich bin mit ihm vereint,
Wo sich nicht mehr trennt, was sich verbunden,
Dort wo keine Träne wird geweint.

Dorten wirst auch du uns wieder finden,
Wenn dein Lieben unserm Lieben gleicht ;
Dort ist auch der Vater frei von Sünden,
Den der blut'ge Mord nicht mehr erreicht.

Und er fühlt, dass ihn kein Wahn betrogen,
Als er aufwärts zu den Sternen sah ;
Denn, wie Jeder wägt, wird ihm gewogen ;
Wer es glaubt, dem ist das Heil'ge nah.

Wort gehalten wird in jeden Räumen
Jedem schönen, glaubigen Gefühl.
Wage du zu irren und zu träumen :
Hoher Sinn liegt oft in kind'schem Spiel."

" Where I am, thou ask'st, and where I wended
When my fleeting shadow pass'd from thee ?
Am I not concluded now, and ended ?
Have not life and love been granted me ?

Ask where now those nightingales are singing
Who, of late, on the soft nights of May,
Set thine ears with soul-fraught music ringing—
Only while their love liv'd, lasted they.

Find I him from whom I had to sever ?
Doubt it not, we met, and we are one,
There, where what is join'd is join'd for ever,
There, where tears are never more to run.

There thou too shalt live with us together,
When thou too hast borne the love we bore ;
There from sin deliver'd, dwells my Father,
Track'd by Murder's bloody sword no more.

There he feels it was no dream deceiving,
Lur'd him starwards to uplift his eye ;
God doth match His gifts to man's believing :
Believe and thou shalt find the Holy nigh.

All thou augurest here of lovely seeming,
There shall find fulfilment in its day ;
Dare, O Friend, be wandering, dare be dreaming,
Lofty thought lies oft in childish play."

There was one poetic form in which Schiller surpassed even Goethe—the narrative ballad—and his poems of " The Diver " and " The Glove " are well known in English translation. And, of course, he was greatest as a dramatic poet, but his dramatic works lie outside our sphere.

German critics add a third name to those of Goethe and Schiller—that of Friedrich Hölderlin—ranking him as a lyrist hardly below the greatest. It is a curious example of the divergence of literary estimates within and without a country, for the very name of this poet is unfamiliar, except to students of German, and even they find it difficult to understand the enthusiasm of his own countrymen. Hölderlin was born in 1770 and was therefore much younger than Goethe or Schiller. Of the two elder poets, he felt Schiller's influence much more strongly—he had the same idealism, the same interest in philosophy, and an even greater love for classical literature, especially Greek. He wrote in classic metres as no German poet has done before or since, and the exquisite form of his poetry was charged with emotion. The coldness which one associates with classicism is not to be found in Hölderlin. But he was over-sensitive and unfortunate ; in 1804 his mind gave way and he never recovered, though he lived nearly forty years longer. His poetry is therefore the work of a young man and the perfection of his style is all the more remarkable.

Poems in classical metres are by far the hardest to render adequately in English, and I have attempted only one of Hölderlin's: "An die Parzen" (To the Fates).

"Nur einen Sommer gönnt, ihr Gewaltigen,
Und einen Herbst zu reifem Gesange mir,
Dass williger mein Herz, vom süssen
Spiele gesättiget, dann mir sterbe!

Die Seele, der im Leben ihr göttlich Recht
Nicht ward, sie ruht auch drunten im Orkus nicht
Doch ist mir einst das Heil'ge, das am
Herzen mir liegt, das Gedicht gelungen.

Willkommen dann, O Stille der Schattenwelt!
Zufrieden bin ich, wenn auch mein Saiten-spiel
Mich nicht hinabgeleitet; einmal
Lebt' ich wie Götter, und mehr bedarf's nicht."

"But one more summer yield me, O Mightiest,
Another harvest to ripen my song for me.
So more willing my heart, by sweetest
Melody satisfied, then falls dying.

The soul of him who, living, his right divine
Attained not, even in Orcus finds no rest
Yet once to me—most holy, dearest,
Closest my heart—was Poesy granted.

Welcome art thou, O silent abode of shades.
Contented am I, e'en if my melody
Goes not before me. Once in my lifetime
Lived I as Gods do; let that suffice me."

(II) THE ROMANTIC POETS, PLATEN AND HEINE

A GREAT host of German poets arose at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, and of these the most important belonged to the Romantic school.

Since the eighteenth century, literary movements in the various countries of Western Europe have tended to synchronise, and the Romantic Movement in German arose about the same time as that in England. It corresponds still more to that revival of interest in the Middle Ages for which Sir Walter Scott stood in this country. Its literary origins were very similar. Scott's romantic poems were heralded by his collection of ballads, the *Border Minstrelsy*, published in 1802–3; and the publication of a collection of German folk poetry in 1805–8; under the title of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (*The Boy's Magic Horn*) was one of the landmarks of the Romantic Movement in Germany. The greatest of the early Romantic poets, Friedrich von Hardenberg (1772–1801), better known as Novalis, had died a few years before, but his poetry was also influenced by folk-song. His work illustrates the difference between the German Romantics and Scott. The former were attracted by the religious and political ideas of the Middle Ages, as well as by its art, letters, and history, and the poetry of Novalis especially is filled with a mystic Catholicism, which finds no

parallel in Scott. There is nothing in Scott like this poem to the Virgin:

" Ich sehe dich in tausend Bildern,
Maria, lieblich ausgedrückt,
Doch keins von allen kann dich schildern,
Wie meine Seele dich erblickt.

Ich weiss nur, dass der Welt Getümmel
Seitdem mir wie ein Traum verweht,
Und ein unnennbar süsser Himmel
Mir ewig im Gemüte steht."

" In many images I know thee.
They shadow forth thy winsome grace,
But, Mary, none of these can show thee
As my soul sees thee face to face.

And since that sight the world's vain fever
E'en like an evil dream is gone,
And in my heart abides for ever,
Sweet beyond telling, heaven alone."

Scott's revival of mediævalism did in time affect religious and even political thought in England, as in the Oxford and Young England movements, but in Germany Romanticism was from the first wider in its scope; Romantics tended to be Catholic or semi-Catholic in religion and reactionary in politics. At the same time they lacked Scott's basic common-sense, and his sympathy with ordinary human instincts. The prose fiction of the Romantics is quite unlike the Waverley Novels. The besetting weaknesses of the movement were formlessness, vagueness, and sentimentality.

Goethe himself welcomed the new collection of ballads, and in his old age he turned again to the story of folk-poetry ; but Goethe stood above and outside all schools and movements. The chief of the later Romantic poets was Joseph von Eichendorff (1788–1875). Eichendorff was a nobleman who had fought against Napoleon and after the war pursued an honourable and successful career in the Civil Service. Through all his experiences he retained a very simple, idealistic, and genial nature. Eichendorff stands to folk-poetry much as Gerhardt and Spee had stood to the folk-song of their day. He is inspired by it, but he applies the inspiration to themes which the folk-singers did not touch. His well-known song "The Millwheel" is almost pure folk-poetry ; it is as if a later singer had rehandled the old theme of the Millwheel and the making and breaking of love.

"In einem kühlen Grunde
Da geht ein Mühlenrad,
Mein' Liebste ist verschwunden,
Die dort gewohnet hat.

Sie hat mir Treu versprochen,
Gab mir ein'n Ring dabei,
Sie hat die Treu gebrochen,
Mein Ringlein sprang entzwei."

"The Millwheel ceases never
In yonder shady dell,
My love is gone for ever
Who there of old did dwell.

She gave a ring for token,
She pledged her troth—in vain,
Her troth is long since broken,
My ring is broke in twain."

But Eichendorff was a passionate worshipper of Nature, unlike the folk-singers, who never regarded Nature as anything but a background for human action or passion. This aspect of his poetry is presented in his " Farewell to the Forest."

" O Täler weit, O Höhen,
O schöner, grüner Wald,
Du meiner Lust und Wehen
Andächt'ger Aufenthalt !
Da draussen, stets betrogen,
Saust die geschäft'ge Welt ;
Schlag noch einmal die Bogen
Um mich, du grünes Zelt !

. . . .

Da steht im Wald geschrieben
Ein stilles, ernstes Wort
Von rechtem Tun und Lieben,
Und was des Menschen Hort.
Ich habe treu gelesen
Die Worte schlicht und wahr,
Und durch mein ganzes Wesen
Ward's unaussprechlich klar.

Bald werd' ich dich verlassen,
Fremd in der Fremde gehn,
Auf buntbewegten Gassen
Des Lebens Schauspiel sehn ;
Und mitten in dem Leben
Wird deines Ernsts Gewalt
Mich Einsamen erheben,
So wird mein Herz nicht alt."

" O Hills and Dales enchanted,
O Forest, green and fair,
Long since devoutly haunted
In all my joy and care,
Still busied, still deceivèd
The world goes roaring past,
Thy arches thousand-leavèd,
Once more around me cast !

. . . . .

For still the Wood is giving
Words solemn and sincere,
Of love and noble living
And all we reckon dear.
When I was fain to hear it—
That message plain and true—
Unspeakably my spirit
Was lighted up anew.

Too soon must be our parting,
Afar again I go,
On garish highways starting,
To view Life's puppet show,
And still when life affrays me
Thy strength will aye enfold,
In loneliness will raise me,—
My heart will ne'er be old."

The love of the Romantics of the supernatural, especially for those tales of the supernatural found in German folk-lore, may be illustrated by Eichendorff's treatment of the " Lorelei " legend.

" ' Es ist schon spät, es wird schon kalt,
Was reitst du einsam durch den Wald ?
Der Wald ist lang, du bist allein,
Du schöne Braut ! Ich führ' dich heim ! '

'Gross ist der Männer Trug und List,
Vor Schmerz mein Herz gebrochen ist,
Wohl irrt das Waldhorn her und hin,
O flieh ! du weisst nicht, wer ich bin.'

'So reich geschmückt ist Ross und Weib,
So wunderschön der junge Leib,
Jetzt kenn' ich dich—Gott steh' mir bei !
Du bist die Hexe Lorelei.'

'Du kennst mich wohl—von hohem Stein
Schaut still mein Schloss tief in den Rhein.
Es ist schon spät, es wird schon kalt,
Kommst nimmermehr aus diesem Wald ! ' "

" ' 'Tis late, 'tis chilly eventide,
Lone through the darkling woods you ride,
Deep are the woods, and you alone,
Fair lady, may I bring you home ? '

'Deep is Man's cunning and his art,
Broken with sorrow is my heart,
The elfin horns around us blow,
Flee—who I am you may not know ! '

'So richly dight her steed and she,
So wondrous fair her young body—
I know you now—O God on high,
You are the witch, the Lorelei.'

'You know me well—yon tower of mine
Sees, silent, from its rock, the Rhine.
'Tis late, 'tis chilly eventide,
Here evermore you must abide.' "

Eichendorff's genuine feeling for natural beauty, his simplicity, and the music of his verse, made him

deservedly popular. In his poems on the death of his child he handled the old familiar themes of love and loss with a peculiar simplicity and tenderness :

" Von fern die Uhren schlagen,
Es ist schon tiefe Nacht,
Die Lampe brennt so düster,
Dein Bettlein ist gemacht.

Die Winde nur noch gehen
Wehklagend um das Haus,
Wir sitzen einsam drinne
Und lauschen oft hinaus.

Es ist, als müsstest leise
Du klopfen an die Tür,
Du hättst dich nur verirret
Und kämst nun müd' zurück.

Wir armen, armen Toren !
Wir irren ja im Graus
Des Dunkels noch verloren—
Du fandest längst nach Haus."

" Afar the clocks are striking,
How late, how late the night !
The little cot is ready,
The lamp is yet alight.

The winds are wailing, wailing,
Above us and around
And we are sitting lonely
And start at every sound.

But surely you are knocking
(So gently) at the door,
You were but lost, and wearied,
Come home to us once more.

Ah, fools and blind and wretched !
Lost in the dark we roam,
In agony and terror,
Long since you found your home."

The Romantic Movement had a short life—its force was spent soon after 1830, but while it lasted it affected poets, who stood somewhat apart from the Romantic school, such as Ludwig Uhland (1787–1862) and Friedrich Rückert (1788–1866).

Uhland was a great student of earlier German literature and a great master of the narrative ballad, a form in which the folk-singers had not been particularly successful. In the pure lyric style he wrote one masterpiece, " Der gute Kamerad " (" The Good Comrade "), which is quite in the folk-song tradition:

" Ich hatt' einen Kameraden,
Einen bessern findst du nit.
Die Trommel schlug zum Streite,
Er ging an meiner Seite
In gleichem Schritt und Tritt.

Eine Kugel kam geflogen ;
Gilt's mir oder gilt es dir ?
Ihn hat es weggerissen,
Er liegt mir vor den Füssen,
Als wär's ein Stück von mir.

Will mir die Hand noch reichen,
Derweil ich eben lad' :
' Kann dir die Hand nicht geben,
Bleib du im ew'gen Leben,
Mein guter Kamerad ! ' "

" I had a trusty comrade
No better man you'll see.
We heard the bugles blowing,
To war together going
Still side by side were we.

Then came a bullet flying ;
For you, or me alone ?
From me it tears him dying.
Now at my feet he's lying,
Oh, part of me is gone !

His hand is held toward me,
But I must load anew ;
' Your hand I cannot hold, lad,
But bide you as of old, lad,
In heaven my comrade true ! ' "

Rückert was a great Orientalist who tried, not very successfully, to naturalise Oriental forms of verse in German, but his most famous poems owe their inspiration to the folk-song and to mediæval German traditions. His " Barbarossa " is the sort of poem which a mediæval folk-singer should have composed but somehow did not.

" Der alte Barbarossa,
Der Kaiser Friederich,
Im unterird'schen Schlosse
Hält er verzaubert sich.

Er ist niemals gestorben,
Er lebt darin noch jetzt ;
Er hat im Schloss verborgen
Zum Schlaf sich hingesetzt.

Er hat hinabgenommen
Des Reiches Herrlichkeit
Und wird einst wiederkommen
Mit ihr zu seiner Zeit.

Der Stuhl ist elfenbeinern,
Darauf der Kaiser sitzt ;
Der Tisch ist marmelsteinern,
Worauf sein Haupt er stützt.

Sein Bart ist nicht von Flachse,
Er ist von Feuersglut,
Ist durch den Tisch gewachsen,
Worauf sein Haupt ausruht.

Er nickt als wie im Traume,
Sein Aug' halb offen zwinkt,
Und je nach langem Raume
Er einem Knaben winkt.

Er spricht im Schlaf zum Knaben :
' Geh hin vors Schloss, o Zwerg,
Und sieh, ob noch die Raben
Herfliegen um den Berg.

Und wenn die alten Raben
Noch fliegen immerdar,
So muss ich auch noch schlafen
Verzaubert hundert Jahr.' "

" Now Barbarossa olden,
The Emperor renowned,
Within a tower is holden
Enchanted, underground.

Not dead is he, but sleeping
Alive until this hour
With dwarfs for pages, keeping
Watch in the hidden tower.

And thither has he taken
The Empire's pomp and pride
Until his time to waken,
And come again, betide.

Of ivory his chair is
As fits a Kaiser's throne.
The table marble fair is
He leans his head upon.

His beard, not white but glowing
And flaming fiery red,
Clear through the stone is growing
Whereon he lays his head.

And, dreaming through the ages,
At length he stirs and sighs,
And beckons to his pages
With half-awakened eyes.

And calls in sleep—' Forth, vassal,
And bring me word if still,
As erst, without the castle
The ravens haunt the hill.

For if the ravens haunt it
And hover still anear,
Needs must I sleep enchanted
Another hundred year.' "

But the Romantic Movement provoked opposition. August von Platen (1796–1835) stands out as the representative classic poet of this period. Platen and Eichendorff were both spiritual sons of Goethe, in whom classical and Romantic influences were uniquely harmonised, and Goethe had given the watchword " Grace and Dignity," which Platen tried to exemplify. His contemporaries were quick to detect a coldness and lack of sympathy in him, and, finding literary life in Germany uncongenial, he turned to Italy for inspiration. His sonnets are among the most perfectly finished in German, and one poem, " The Pilgrim [i.e. the Emperor Charles V] before the Monastery of St. Just," is in all German anthologies.

" Nacht ist's, und Stürme sausen für und für ;
Hispan'sche Mönche, schliesst mir auf die Tür !

Lasst hier mich ruhn, bis Glockenton mich weckt,
Der zum Gebet euch in die Kirche schreckt !

Bereitet mir, was euer Haus vermag,
Ein Ordenskleid und einen Sarkophag !

Gönnt mir die kleine Zelle, weiht mich ein !
Mehr als die Hälfte dieser Welt war mein.

Das Haupt, das nun der Schere sich bequemt,
Mit mancher Krone ward's bediademt.

Die Schulter, die der Kutte nun sich bückt,
Hat kaiserlicher Hermelin geschmückt.

Nun bin ich vor dem Tod den Toten gleich
Und fall' in Trümmer wie das alte Reich."

" 'Tis night, and tempests roar unceasingly :
O Spanish monks, unlock your gates for me !

Here let me rest, until the pealing bell
Shall drive you chapelwards your beads to tell.

Nought but your Order's common gifts I crave,
A friar's raiment and a friar's grave.

Grant me a cell, receive me at your shrine,
More than the half of all the world was mine.

This head that meekly to the tonsure bows,
Has borne full many a crown upon its brows.

This shoulder, bending low the cowl to don,
Imperial ermine wore in days agone.

Like to the dead am I before death calls,
And fall in ruins as my Empire falls."

Standing apart from the Romantic School and from the classicism of Platen is Heinrich Heine (1797–1856).

Heine occupies a very strange position. To foreigners he is the greatest German lyrist, if not the only German poet who counts. Though his lyrics are acknowledged to be untranslatable, they

have been more frequently translated into English than any other German poems. German critics are inclined to rate him much lower. For instance, that eminent critic, Dr. Witkop, indicates very acutely the discords in his character and temperament and his failure to reach that harmony of spirit which Goethe and Schiller had attained. He was from the first at odds with the world—with his own race and religion, for he was a renegade Jew and no one could take him for a Christian—with his native land, for he had strong leanings to France —with his adopted country, for in Paris he longed for Germany. A Liberal in politics, with no faith in Liberals, a romantic poet but an anti-Romanticist, an enthusiast and a cynic—one can pile up the contradictions indefinitely. But criticism of this kind is apt to lead us away from the poet's work, and possibly foreigners approach this with a more open mind than do his countrymen, with their recollections of the personal and political feuds and the scandals of all kinds in which he was concerned. Heine was, to say the least, ill-balanced morally. So was Catullus, so was Burns, so was Byron. But as a lyrist he ranks with the greatest of these.

Indeed, his art is strongest where that of other German poets tends to be weak. For them the traditions of ease, simplicity, and melody become snares. Ease may degenerate into slackness, and simplicity into childishness; their sentiment is facile and their thought tenuous. The average English drawing-room ballad is a terrible example of the fate which attends those who write for music. The German lyric does not fall to this level, but it does not entirely escape the same faults. Too

often the works of the lesser men are lacking in concision, in intensity and in power of thought. Heine knew and loved German folk-song, but as a Jew he had other literary traditions. His countrymen had composed the Psalms and the Song of Solomon. No German poet had written with such intensity of feeling, with such bold imagery as the Hebrews. No German poet had said "Since thy loving kindness is better than life . . ." or "Love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave," in no German battlesong had the poet ordered the sun and the moon to stand still that his people might be avenged of their enemies. This Hebrew, Oriental element is easily traceable in Heine's poems.

Again, Heine was not a Romanticist who dreamed vague and happy dreams about the Middle Ages. His culture was largely French and he admired the French clearness of thought and expression.

Heine used to a great extent the vocabulary of the simplest folk-poetry. He also used (with some freedom) the old lyric measures, and he has (almost beyond any other German poet) the qualities of simplicity and melody. To a foreigner his best lyrics are distinctly easier to read than an ordinary German letter and very much easier than an average German newspaper paragraph. His lyrics are the joy of the composer. Countless people who know nothing else about Heine have heard "The Two Grenadiers." But with all this he has transmuted the folk-songs into something entirely different—something more intense in feeling, more perfect in form. No one could mistake the simplest lyric of Heine's for a folk-song. Take "The Grenadiers" itself, that magical embodiment of the Napoleonic legend :

" Nach Frankreich zogen zwei Grenadier',
Die waren in Russland gefangen ;
Und als sie kamen ins deutsche Quartier,
Sie liessen die Köpfe hangen.

Da hörten sie beide die traurige Mär' :
Dass Frankreich verloren gegangen,
Besiegt und zerschlagen das grosse Heer—
Und der Kaiser, der Kaiser gefangen.

Da weinten zusammen die Grenadier'
Wohl ob der kläglichen Kunde.
Der eine sprach : ' Wie weh wird mir,
Wie brennt meine alte Wunde ! '

Der andre sprach : ' Das Lied ist aus,
Auch ich möcht' mit dir sterben ;
Doch hab' ich Weib und Kind zu Haus,
Die ohne mich verderben.'

' Was schert mich Weib, was schert mich Kind,
Ich trage weit bessres Verlangen ;
Lass sie betteln gehn, wenn sie hungrig sind—
Mein Kaiser, mein Kaiser gefangen !

Gewähr mir, Bruder, eine Bitt' :
Wenn ich jetzt sterben werde,
So nimm meine Leiche nach Frankreich mit,
Begrab mich in Frankreichs Erde.

Das Ehrenkreuz am roten Band
Sollst du aufs Herz mir legen ;
Die Flinte gib mir in die Hand,
Und gürt mir um den Degen.

So will ich liegen und horchen still,
Wie eine Schildwach', im Grabe,
Bis einst ich höre Kanonengebrüll
Und wiehernder Rosse Getrabe.

Dann reitet mein Kaiser wohl über mein Grab,
Viel Schwerter klirren und blitzen ;
Dann steig' ich gewaffnet hervor aus dem Grab—
Den Kaiser, den Kaiser zu schützen ! ' "

" To France, from Russian bondage free,
Two Grenadiers would go,
But when they came to Germany
Their heads were hanging low.

For there they heard that France was lost,
Vanquished for evermore,
Aye, shattered lay the mighty host,
Captive the Emperor.

The Grenadiers they wept and sighed
To hear the tale of mourning,
' Alas for me,' one soldier cried,
' Now is my old wound burning.'

The other said, ' The end has come,
I too would live no longer,
But I have wife and child at home,
And they must die of hunger.'

' O what to me are child and wife,
Though now they be forsaken ?
If they hunger let them beg through life,
My Emperor is taken.

But, brother, grant me this one prayer,
Now when I come to die,
To France—O take my body there
In kind French earth to lie.

Lay on my heart the scarlet band,
The cross that was my pride ;
Place my old musket in my hand,
My sabre at my side.

There like a sentry will I wait,
Within my grave—till once
I hear the tramp of horses' feet,
The roaring of the guns.

My Emperor rides o'er my grave,
Swords ring and gleam—once more
I rise in arms from out the grave
To guard my Emperor.' "

One may say of verse translations of Heine what Dr. Johnson said of second marriages, that they are the triumph of hope over experience. The poet's track is marked by the dry bones of translators. But the temptation is irresistible. Here is one of his simplest and tenderest poems : " Du bist wie eine Blume."

" Du bist wie eine Blume
So hold und schön und rein ;
Ich schau' dich an, und Wehmut
Schleicht mir ins Herz hinein.

Mir ist, als ob ich die Hände
Aufs Haupt dir legen sollt',
Betend, dass Gott dich erhalte
So rein und schön und hold."

" Even as a perfect flower
Pure, fair and dear thou art.
I look on thee and sorrow
Steals o'er my inmost heart.

My hands I lay devoutly
Upon thy head in prayer,
That God may ever guard thee,
So pure, and dear and fair."

The simplest poems of Heine are the hardest to render in English, and this may serve as an example. There is no equivalent in English for " Du bist." " Thou art " is either archaic or affected, and " du bist " is neither. It is as unaffected as if the poet had said, " My dear, you're just like a flower." In the same way, the order of the words in the first two lines of the original is perfectly natural, whereas in the translation the natural order is departed from. Lastly, " perfect " in line 1 of the English version is mere padding, and there is no padding in Heine. Such are the traps into which one falls in translating the first two lines of a poem whose meaning is perfectly clear, and if the English version is not entirely valueless it is because its very defects draw attention to the qualities of the original. Here is another lyric, in which tenderness is combined with intensity of feeling, with bold imagery and yet with the greatest simplicity and precision :

" Aus meinen Tränen spriessen
Viel blühende Blumen hervor
Und meine Seufzer werden
Ein Nachtigallenchor.

Und wenn du mich lieb hast, Kindchen,
Schenk' ich dir die Blumen all',
Und vor deinem Fenster soll klingen
Das Lied der Nachtigall."

"Out of my tears are springing
Flowers that will never fail,
My bitter sighs are changing
Each to a nightingale.

Dear child, if thou wilt love me
To thee my flowers I bring,
And at thy chamber window,
The nightingale shall sing."

In this, passion and bitterness are mingled :

"Sie haben mich gequälet
Geärgert blau und blass,
Die Einen mit ihrer Liebe,
Die Andern mit ihrem Hass.

Sie haben das Brot mir vergiftet,
Sie gossen mir Gift ins Glas,
Die Einen mit ihrer Liebe,
Die Andern mit ihrem Hass.

Doch sie, die mich am meisten
Gequält, geärgert, betrübt,
Die hat mich nie gehasset
Und hat mich nie geliebt."

"They left me pale and bruiséd,
They plagued me soon and late,
Aye, some because they loved me
And some in utter hate.

They filled my cup with poison,
They drugged the bread I ate,
Aye, some because they loved me
And some in utter hate.

But she beyond all other
My grief and torment proved,
She, who would never hate me,
She, who has never loved."

But Heine is something more than a singer of pretty or passionate love-songs. He is a poet of ideas, one of the "Knights of the Holy Ghost." Here is an extract from his confession of faith:

"Jetzo, da ich ausgewachsen,
Viel gelesen, viel gereist,
Schwillt mein Herz, und ganz von Herzen
Glaub' ich an den heil'gen Geist.

Dieser tat die grössten Wunder,
Und viel grössre tut er noch,
Er zerbrach die Zwingherrnburgen
Und zerbrach des Knechtes Joch.

Alte Todeswunden heilt er,
Und erneut das alte Recht,
Alle Menschen, gleichgeboren,
Sind ein adliges Geschlecht.

Er verscheucht die bösen Nebel
Und das dunkle Hirngespinst,
Das uns Lieb' und Lust verleidet,
Tag und Nacht uns angegrinst.

Tausend Ritter, wohlgewappnet,
Hat der heil'ge Geist erwählt,
Seinen Willen zu erfüllen ;
Und er hat sie mutbeseelt.

Ihre teuren Schwerter blitzen,
Ihre guten Banner wehn !
Ei, du möchtest wohl, mein Kindchen,
Solche stolze Ritter sehn ?

Nun, so schau mich an, mein Kindchen.
Küsse mich, und schaue dreist ;
Denn ich selber bin ein solcher
Ritter von dem heil'gen Geist."

" Now that I have grown to manhood,
Read and journeyed more than most,
Swells my heart in truth believing,
Steadfast, in the Holy Ghost.

He who wrought the greatest wonders,
Greater still can do. He broke
Strongholds of the robber barons
Shattering the servile yoke.

Mortal wounds forever healing,
He renews each ancient right,
Men are equal born before Him,
All are noble in His sight.

He has banished clouds of sorrow,
Every phantom as it gloomed,
All that hindered love and gladness,
Day and night that held us doomed.

Knights in thousands, nobly weaponed,
Did the Spirit set apart,
And, that they might do His pleasure,
Put His courage in their heart.

Bright their precious swords are gleaming,
High their lordly banners wave,
Gladly wouldst thou see, my darling,
See these glorious knights and brave.

Kiss me, and look boldly, darling,
One is standing in thy sight,
For I rode behind His banner,
I, the Holy Spirit's Knight ! "

One must admit that Heine was apt to transfer his allegiance, and it would not be difficult to select other poems justifying Carlyle's description of him as a blackguard Jew. Apart from this merely devilish element in his work, there are the strange and sudden changes of tone from the pathetic or the romantic to the humorous or cynical, which attract some readers and repel others. One finds this discord in poems where he is most tragically sincere, as in the poignant lament of the German exile in his " Mattress-Grave " in Paris.

" Flogest aus nach Sonn' und Glück,
Nackt und schlecht kommst du zurück.
Deutsche Treue, deutsche Hemde,
Die verschleisst man in der Fremde.

Siehst sehr sterbeblässlich aus,
Doch getrost, du bist zu Haus.
Warm wie an dem Flackerherde
Liegt man in der deutschen Erde.

Mancher leider wurde lahm
Und nicht mehr nach Hause kam—
Streckt verlangend aus die Arme,
Dass der Herr sich sein erbarme ! "

"Forth ye flew for sun and fame
Back in poortith and in shame.
German sarks, leal German herts
Fare but ill in foreign pairts.

Man, but ye look sair aghast,
O tak' hert, ye're hame at last.
Warm as by the ingle side
Here in German earth ye'll bide.

Aye, but mony ane fa's lame
Never mair can hirple hame,
Airms outstretching, maun bemoan him,
Cries to God for pity on him."

No poet but Heine would have referred to the shirts.

In 1847, as everyone knows, he was attacked by an incurable disease—softening of the spinal marrow. For eight years he lay dying in his sick room in Paris, which had been his home since 1831, losing one sense after another, but with wit and courage unimpaired. Indeed, in these last sad years his genius developed, and some of his finest poems are in *Romancero*, published in 1851. The Oriental imagery tended to disappear from his later poetry. We read less of nightingales and stars, and the style is simpler. One example will show with what concision Heine could pare away superfluities till the lyric becomes almost an epigram.

" Täglich ging die wunderschöne
Sultanstochter auf und nieder
Um die Abendzeit am Springbrunn,
Wo die weissen Wasser plätschern.

Täglich stand der junge Sklave
Um die Abendzeit am Springbrunn,
Wo die weissen Wasser plätschern ;
Täglich ward er bleich und bleicher.

Eines Abends trat die Fürstin
Auf ihn zu mit raschen Worten :
' Deinen Namen will ich wissen,
Deine Heimat, deine Sippschaft ! '

Und der Sklave sprach : ' Ich heisse
Mohamet, ich bin aus Yemen,
Und mein Stamm sind jene Asra,
Welche sterben, wenn sie lieben.' "

" Daily walked the wondrous lovely
Sultan's daughter, hither, yonder,
Toward even by the fountain,
Where the waters white were plashing.

And the youthful slave stood daily
Toward even at the fountain,
Where the waters white were plashing,
Daily he grew pale and paler.

On an evening stepped the Princess
To the slave, and spoke abruptly,
' Tell me now thy name, I bid thee,
Where thy home and what thy kindred.'

And he answered her, ' My name is
Mohamêt, I come from Yemen
And my kinsmen are the Asra ;
If they love, they die of loving.' "

Here is a very touching poem of this period:

" Im Traume war ich wieder jung und munter—
Es war das Landhaus, hoch am Bergesrand,
Wettlaufend lief ich dort den Pfad hinunter,
Wettlaufend mit Ottilien Hand in Hand.

Wie das Persönchen fein formiert ! Die süssen
Meergrünen Augen zwinkern nixenhaft.
Sie steht so fest auf ihren kleinen Füssen,
Ein Bild von Zierlichkeit vereint mit Kraft.

Der Ton der Stimme ist so treu und innig
Man glaubt zu schaun bis in der Seele Grund ;
Und alles was sie spricht ist klug und sinnig ;
Wie eine Rosenknospe ist der Mund.

Es ist nicht Liebesweh, was mich beschleichet,
Ich schwärme nicht, ich bleibe bei Verstand ;
Doch wunderbar ihr Wesen mich erweichet
Und heimlich bebend küss' ich ihre Hand.

Ich glaub', am Ende brach ich eine Lilie,
Die gab ich ihr und sprach ganz laut dabei :
' Heirate mich und sei mein Weib, Ottilie,
Damit ich fromm wie du und glücklich sei.'

Was sie zur Antwort gab, das weiss ich nimmer,
Denn ich erwachte jählings—und ich war
Wieder ein Kranker, der im Krankenzimmer
Trostlos darniederliegt seit manchem Jahr."

" In dreams I wandered, young and merry-hearted,
There was the Highland cottage on the brae,
And there was Tilly. Hand in hand we started,
Together racing down the rocky way.

O, but she is of dainty mould ; the sweetest
Of sea-green eyes gleam like a laughing fay's,
Her little foot's the surest and the fleetest,
She stands a living type of strength and grace !

Sweet is her voice, the truest heart revealing,
Her very soul lies open to my view,
Her words are full of true and tender feeling,
Her mouth is like an opening rosebud too.

No sickness sent by cruel Love betrays me,
I do not rave, undimmed my senses stand,
But wondrously her gentle nature sways me,
And, inly moved, I bow and kiss her hand.

And then I think, I plucked a virgin lily,
Gave her the flower, and quick my greeting flew,
' O, would you only be my wife, dear Tilly,
I would be good and happy, just like you.'

What answer did she give ? I ne'er may know it,
For on a sudden I awoke. Again
The sick room closed upon the stricken poet,
Who many a year in misery has lain."

" I do not know," Heine had once said, " if I deserve that a laurel wreath should one day be laid on my coffin. Poetry, dearly as I have loved it, has always been to me but a divine plaything. But lay on my coffin a sword, for I was a brave soldier in the War for the Liberation of Humanity." And

it was in fact owing to his political activities that he had to spend the last twenty-five years of his life in exile. This is his own epitaph:

" Verlorner Posten in dem Freiheitskriege,
Hielt ich seit dreissig Jahren treulich aus.
Ich kämpfte ohne Hoffnung, dass ich siege,
Ich wusste, nie komm' ich gesund nach Haus.

Ich wachte Tag und Nacht—ich konnt' nicht schlafen,
Wie in dem Lagerzelt der Freunde Schar.
(Auch hielt das laute Schnarchen dieser Braven
Mich wach, wenn ich ein bischen schlummrig war.)

In jenen Nächten hat Langweil' ergriffen
Mich oft, auch Furcht (nur Narren fürchten nichts)—
Sie zu verscheuchen, hab' ich dann gepfiffen
Die frechen Reime eines Spottgedichts.

Ja, wachsam stand ich, das Gewehr im Arme,
Und nahte irgend ein verdächt'ger Gauch,
So schoss ich gut und jagt' ihm eine warme
Brühwarme Kugel in den schnöden Bauch.

Mitunter freilich mocht' es sich ereignen,
Dass solch ein schlechter Gauch gleichfalls sehr gut
Zu schiessen wusste—ach, ich kann's nicht leugnen
Die Wunden klaffen—es verströmt mein Blut.

Ein Posten ist vakant !—Die Wunden klaffen—
Der eine fällt, die andern rücken nach—
Doch fall' ich unbesiegt, und meine Waffen
Sind nicht gebrochen—Nur mein Herze brach."

" I held an outpost ('tis a soldier's story)
For thirty years where Freedom's banner flew,
I fought without a hope of gain or glory,
No more should I return in peace, I knew.

By day, by night I watched, while on their pillows
Safe in the camp, my friends were sleeping sound.
(The lusty snoring of the noble fellows,
Has kept me wakeful on my lonely round.)

Those were the nights when weariness assailed me,
And fear (fools never fear !), yes, fear at times.
To beat them off and ease the heart that failed me,
I whistled o'er a set of mocking rhymes.

On the alert I stood ; my hand was steady,
My rifle loaded and my courage staunch,
A fool came near—I had a bullet ready,
A nice hot bullet for his ugly paunch.

But now and then (a fact there's no escaping)
I found that fools could shoot as straight as I,
And stopped a bullet—well, my wounds are gaping,
My heart's best blood streams out—the end is nigh.

Ungarrisoned the post—the sentry dying—
Though one may fall, the army presses on,
Unvanquished still, I see the colours flying,
No weapon broke—broke is my heart alone."

There is no more characteristic poem of Heine's in its union of romantic idealism, cynicism, wit and pathos.

THE LYRIC SINCE HEINE

(I) THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY

Since Heine there has been no German lyrist of equal power, and the history of German poetry during the last seventy years has been very unlike that of the previous seventy. There is an absence of great names, but this has been an age of immense and successful activity in the lyric. School after school of poets has arisen and flourished and faded. In the eighteen-thirties the Romantic movement began to lose ground, and the writers of "Young Germany," with whom Heine was more or less loosely associated, became prominent. In the following decade a school of political poets arose. They voiced the desires for representative government and a united Germany, which were shared by the educated classes. Their poems bear too obviously the mark of their origin. Heine might call himself a soldier in the army of Freedom, but he felt under no obligation to confine his lyrics to that subject. Except for a few stirring pieces by Georg Herwegh (1817–75), little of real value has been left by the political poets. The Revolution of 1848 ended in Germany in a collapse, which could not be dignified by the name of tragedy, and this school had its day.

After 1848 there was, not unnaturally, a reaction against political poetry. The younger poets turned to art for their inspiration. Maximilian II of

Bavaria—like other kings of his house, a lover of art and letters—invited the more prominent writers to Munich, and in the sunshine of royal favour a Munich School of Poets began to flourish. Their leaders, Emanuel Geibel (1815–84) and Paul Heyse[1] (1830–1914), had a kind of primacy in German letters in the third quarter of the century. Their verses were well conceived and finely finished, but they expressed secondary rather than primary emotions and ideas. They were sentimental rather than passionate, cultured rather than inspired. There is a pretty little poem of Geibel's which may serve as a sample :

" Wenn sich zwei Herzen scheiden,
Die sich dereinst geliebt,
Das ist ein grosses Leiden,
Wie gröss'res nimmer gibt.
Es klingt das Wort so traurig gar :
Fahr' wohl, fahr' wohl auf immerdar
Wenn sich zwei Herzen scheiden,
Die sich dereinst geliebt.

Als ich zuerst empfunden,
Dass Liebe brechen mag :
Mir war's, als sei verschwunden
Die Sonn' am hellen Tag.
Mir klang's im Ohre wunderbar.
Fahr' wohl, fahr' wohl auf immerdar !
Da ich zuerst empfunden,
Dass Liebe brechen mag.

Mein Frühling ging zur Rüste,
Ich weiss es wohl, warum ;
Die Lippe, die mich küsste,
Ist worden kühl und stumm.

[1] *Lyrische und Epische Dichtungen*, Cotta'sche Buchhandlung Nachfolger, Stuttgart.

Das eine Wort nur sprach sie klar :
Fahr' wohl, fahr' wohl auf immerdar !
Mein Frühling ging zur Rüste,
Ich weiss es wohl, warum."

" When hearts in youth do sever,
That loved each other well,
No greater grief can ever
Be theirs to hear or tell.
O then they find that parting sore,
' Farewell, farewell, for evermore.'
When hearts in youth do sever
That loved each other well.

When first I did discover
That love could break and die,
And lover part from lover,
The sun paled in the sky.
The words resounded o'er and o'er,
' Farewell, farewell, for evermore ! '
When first I did discover
That love could break and die.

For me the spring has perished,
And wherefore, well I know,
And lovely lips I cherished
Lie still and cold and low.
One message clear alone they bore,
' Farewell, farewell, for evermore ! '
For me the spring has perished,
And wherefore, well I know."

If Heyse rose out of the cultured mediocrity of the school, it was when he applied his finished style to themes which touched him nearly—as in this poem on the death of his child.

" Mir war's, ich hört' es an der Türe pochen,
Und fuhr empor, als wärst du wieder da
Und sprächest wieder, wie du oft gesprochen,
Mit Schmeichelton : ' Darf ich hinein, Papa ? '

Und da ich abends ging am steilen Strand,
Fühlt' ich dein Händchen warm in meiner Hand.

Und wo die Flut Gestein herangewälzt,
Sagt' ich ganz laut : Gib acht, dass du nicht fällst ! "

" It sounded like a knock while I was reading :
I started as if you again were here.
And as in olden days I heard you pleading,
' May I come in beside you, Daddy dear ? '

And when to-day I paced the steep sea strand
Your little hand lay warm within my hand.
And where the waves have washed away the wall,
I said aloud, ' Be careful now, don't fall.' "

But while the Munich School maintained the tradition of the older singers, German critics look elsewhere for the real succession—to four poets, who lived far from the literary centres, who worked independently of each other, and who enjoyed in their own time no great reputation as poets at all. These were Mörike, Keller, Meyer, and Storm. Perhaps Hebbel and the poetess Annette von Droste-Hülshoff may be added to this list, and in more recent times Liliencron and Dehmel.

Eduard Mörike (1804–75) was sensitive and diffident to excess. First a country parson, then a teacher of literature, he shrank as far as he could

from the rougher contacts of life, finding comfort in nature and in an ideal world of his own creation. He has certain affinities with the poets of the Romantic School, but is free from the sentimentality and vagueness which beset them. Mörike's conceptions are always clear and he has a peculiarly poignant simplicity of expression. Dr. Lees quotes from one of Mörike's letters a very illuminating reference to his method. Speaking of the following poem, "Schön Rohtraut," the poet says. "In Cleversulzbach I encountered by chance, when reading a dictionary of foreign words, the old German name Rohtraut, which before was quite unknown to me. It seemed to glow with the radiance of roses, and the figure of the king's daughter stood before me. Warmed by this vision, I stepped from my room into the garden, walked once down the broad path to the arbour at the end, and had invented the poem and almost simultaneously the metre and the first lines, whereupon the execution followed of its own accord."

"Wie heisst König Ringangs Töchterlein?
Rohtraut, Schön-Rohtraut.
Was tut sie denn den ganzen Tag,
Da sie wohl nicht spinnen und nähen mag?
Tut fischen und jagen.
O dass ich doch ihr Jäger wär'!
Fischen und Jagen freute mich sehr.
Schweig' stille, mein Herze!

Und über eine kleine Weil',
Rohtraut, Schön-Rohtraut,
So dient der Knab' auf Ringangs Schloss
In Jägertracht und hat ein Ross,
Mit Rohtraut zu jagen.

O dass ich doch ein Königssohn wär' !
Rohtraut, Schön-Rohtraut lieb' ich so sehr.
Schweig' stille, mein Herze !

Einsmals sie ruhten am Eichenbaum,
Da lacht Schön-Rohtraut :
Was siehst mich an so wunniglich :
' Wenn du das Herz hast, küsse mich ! '
' Ach ! ' erschrak der Knabe !
Doch denket er : mir ist's vergunnt,
Und küsset Schön-Rohtraut auf den Mund.
Schweig' stille, mein Herze !

Darauf sie ritten schweigend heim,
Rohtraut, Schön-Rohtraut ;
Es jauchzt der Knab' in seinem Sinn :
Und würd'st du heute Kaiserin,
Mich sollt's nicht kränken :
Ihr tausend Blätter im Walde wisst,
Ich hab' Schön-Rohtrauts Mund geküsst !
Schweig' stille, mein Herze ! "

George Meredith made a beautiful version of this poem:

" What is the name of King Ringang's daughter ?
Rohtraut, Beauty Rohtraut.
And what does she do the livelong day,
Since she dare not knit and spin alway ?
O hunting and fishing is ever her play
And heigh ! that her huntsman I might be,
I'd hunt and fish right merrily.
Be silent, heart !

And it chanced that after this some time,
Rohtraut, Beauty Rohtraut.

The boy in the castle had gained access,
And a horse he has got and a huntsman's dress,
To hunt and to fish with the merry Princess ;
And oh ! that a king's son I might be !
Beauty Rohtraut, I love so tenderly.
Hush ! hush ! my heart.

Under a grey old oak they sat,
Beauty, Beauty Rohtraut.
She laughs, ' Why look you so slyly at me ?
If you have heart enough, come kiss me ! '
Cried the breathless boy, ' Kiss thee ? '
But he thinks, ' Kind fortune has favoured my youth,'
And thrice he has kissed Beauty Rohtraut's mouth.
Down, down ! mad heart.

Then slowly and silently they rode home,
Rohtraut, Beauty Rohtraut—
The boy was lost in his delight :
And wert thou empress this very night
I would not heed or feel the blight ;
Ye thousand leaves of the wild wood wist
How Beauty Rohtraut's mouth I kissed.
Hush ! Hush ! wild heart."

The vividness of the vision is amazing. There is even more dramatic power in a simpler lyric, " Das verlassene Mägdlein " (The Forsaken Lassie), which is one of the great things in German song—recalling folk-poetry, but with greater intensity and higher art.

" Früh, wann die Hähne krähn,
Eh' die Sternlein verschwinden,
Muss ich am Herde stehn,
Muss Feuer zünden.

Schön ist der Flammen Schein,
Es springen die Funken ;
Ich schaue so drein,
In Leid versunken.

Plötzlich, da kommt es mir,
Treuloser Knabe,
Dass ich die Nacht von dir
Geträumet habe.

Träne auf Träne dann
Stürzet hernieder ;
So kommt der Tag heran—
O ging' er wieder ! "

I have ventured on a Broad Scots rendering :

" When the cocks craw,
Or the wee stars are gane,
I maun kindle the fire
On the cauld hearthstane.

The sparks flee up,
And the lowe blinks bonnie,
I glower at the licht
Mair waefu' than ony.

Then it comes ower me,
Fause lad ! my sorrow !
I did but dream o' ye
A' the nicht thorow.

Fast fa' the tears,
On the hard hearthstane,
And the day's here, but O
Gin it were gane ! "

Gottfried Keller (1819–90) is the greatest author who has arisen among the German-speaking Swiss. He was of humble origin, and his father died when he was yet young, but his mother by hard work and economy managed to provide him with a good education. He succeeded in obtaining means to study art, but after two years he discovered that his talents did not lie in that way, and returned home. At the age of twenty-nine he went out again to study at Heidelberg, and after his return his genius found at last free and full expression in the novel. One of his short stories, *A Village Romeo and Juliet*, has hardly a parallel in English outside the works of Thomas Hardy. Keller's life was a continual struggle, first for bread, then for self-expression, and recognition did not come till long after he had achieved the mastery of his art. But he won through with little help, save from his own indomitable will. His lyrics belong to his "lost years," when he had failed in art and was striving for some other outlet. Much of this strain and effort is traceable in the poems themselves. He was not by nature a lyric poet, and his verses often lack smoothness, but they reveal the native power and grip of the man. He was no unworthy countryman of the Swiss who broke Leopold of Austria at Sempach and Charles the Bold at Morat, and faced the chivalry of France at Marignano. Poor and friendless, he never cried craven, and his steadfast courage glows in these lines.

TRÜBES WETTER

"Es ist ein stiller Regentag,
So weich, so ernst, und doch so klar,
Wo durch den Dämmer brechen mag
Die Sonne weiss und sonderbar.

Ein wunderliches Zwielicht spielt
Beschaulich über Berg und Tal ;
Natur, halb warm und halb verkühlt,
Sie lächelt noch und weint zumal.

Die Hoffnung, das Verlorensein
Sind gleicher Stärke in mir wach ;
Die Lebenslust, die Todespein,
Sie ziehn auf meinem Herzen Schach.

Ich aber, mein bewusstes Ich
Beschau das Spiel in stiller Ruh,
Und meine Seele rüstet sich
Zum Kampfe mit dem Schicksal zu."

Gloomy Weather

" It is a quiet day of rain,
Gentle and grave, and yet so clear,
When through the gloom you see again
The sun all weirdly white appear.

And musingly o'er dales and hills
A wondrous twilight softly sweeps,
Now Nature warms, and now she chills,
Smiles now, and once again she weeps.

And now in me, Hope and Despair,
Alike in strength, awake and start,
The Joy of Life, and Deadly Care,
Play out their chess-play on my heart.

Aware, unmoved by hope or fear,
I watch the game, and while I wait,
My soul is girding on her gear,
To grapple once again with Fate."

Possibly Keller's art training helped him to visualise. At any rate his pictorial poetry shows the same grip of the concrete, or as in "Winternacht" (A Winter Night), the conversion of a fancy into a tragic reality.

"Nicht ein Flügelschlag ging durch die Welt,
Still und blendend lag der weisse Schnee.
Nicht ein Wölklein hing am Sternenzelt,
Keine Welle schlug im starren See.

Aus der Tiefe stieg der Seebaum auf,
Bis sein Wipfel in dem Eis gefror ;
An den Ästen klomm die Nix' herauf,
Schaute durch das grüne Eis empor.

Auf dem dünnen Glase stand ich da,
Das die schwarze Tiefe von mir schied ;
Dicht ich unter meinen Füssen sah
Ihre weisse Schönheit Glied um Glied.

Mit ersticktem Jammer tastet' sie
An der harten Decke her und hin,
Ich vergess' das dunkle Antlitz nie,
Immer, immer liegt es mir im Sinn !"

"O'er the world no feather fluttered by,
Still and white and blinding lay the snow,
Not a cloudlet floated in the sky,
Not a wave disturbed the mere below.

From the depths the waterweed had grown,
Till its crown in ice was frozen fast,
By its branches climbed a mermaid lone
Gazing upwards through green ice at last.

There I stood upon a glassy sheet,
'Twixt me and the black deeps interposed,
I saw underneath my very feet
Her white beauty limb by limb disclosed.

She pressed in stifled agony, for a space,
That adamantine roof now here, now there,
O, the anguish of that shadowed face,
Ever, ever, in my heart I bear."

Conrad Ferdinand Meyer (1825–98) was also a German-speaking Swiss poet, but in most things the antithesis of Keller. He belonged to a patrician family, while Keller was a plebeian. In Keller a strong, even coarse, nature forced its way upwards. Meyer was the last of a self-conscious, refined, and rather morbid family of gentlefolk. There was indeed a taint of madness in his blood. His mother died insane, and in his later years he suffered from mental disease. He was only too keenly aware of his own weakness, and it was not till he was nearly forty that he found in poetry a means of self-expression, which proved his salvation, till, six years before his death, the shadow fell on his mind and only slowly lifted.

Meyer began to write poetry at an age when he could hardly have had the enthusiasm of youth. And besides it was never in his nature to speak out (as Arnold said of Gray) to reveal directly his own emotions. Hence his poetry tended to be objective and descriptive. But he far surpassed the Munich School in his descriptive art, in his power of realising a situation, in the depth of his reflections, and even in the flawless finish of his style. Meyer was never afraid of being simple. Here is a pathetic little poem on a dead child:

" Es hat den Garten sich zum Freund gemacht,
Dann welkten es und er im Herbste sacht,
Die Sonne ging, und es und er entschlief,
Gehüllt in eine Decke weiss und tief.

Jetzt ist der Garten unversehns erwacht
Die Kleine schlummert fest in ihrer Nacht.
'Wo steckst du ?' summt es dort und summt es hier.
Der ganze Garten fragt nach ihr, nach ihr.

Die blaue Winde klettert schlank empor
Und blickt ins Haus : 'Komm hinterm Schrank hervor!
Wo birgst du dich ? Du tust dir's selbst zuleid !
Was hast du für ein neues Sommerkleid ?' "

" She loved the garden and it held her dear,
They pined together with the dying year,
The sun went down ; the two friends fell asleep,
Wrapt in one coverlet, broad, white and deep.

The garden wakens with a joyous thrill,
Aye, but the little maiden slumbers still,
'Where are you hiding ?' say the leaves astir,
And all the garden calls for her, for her.

The flowering creeper climbs the cottage wall,
Looks in and cries, 'Such fun, don't miss it all !
I know you're hiding there behind the press,
I say, have you a nice new summer dress ?' "

In a more ambitious vein he writes " In a Night of Storm ":

" Es fährt der Wind gewaltig durch die Nacht
In seine gellen Pfeifen bläst der Föhn.
Prophetisch kämpft am Himmel eine Schlacht
Und überschreit ein wimmernd Sterbgestöhn.

As the wind rises, and the roof trembles, the poet sees the lamp in his room sway gently to and fro:

Mir redet diese Flamme wunderbar
Von einer windbewegten Ampel Licht,
Die einst geglommen für ein nächtlich Paar
Ein greises und ein göttlich Angesicht.

Es sprach der Friedestifter, den du weisst,
In einer solchen wilden Nacht wie heut:
'Hörst, Nikodeme, du den Schöpfer Geist,
Der mächtig weht und seine Welt erneut?'"

"The storm-wind charges through the night amain,
The mountain gales are piping shrill and high,
There's strife in heaven; ever and again,
A dying wail is borne across the sky.

. . . . . .

And I remember, looking at the light,
How long ago, a swaying lamp did shine,
Upon two men communing in the night,
One was a grey-haired sage, and one divine.

Then the Peace-Bringer spake that word thou know'st
(While as to-night the gathering tempest grew),
'Hark, Nicodemus, so the Holy Ghost
Breathes mightily and shapes the world anew.'"

Theodor Storm (1817–88) was a contemporary of Keller's and Meyer's. Like them, he lived far from the centres of German literary activity, except for a period of exile at Potsdam. Storm was, like Keller, pre-eminently a novelist, but he brought into lyric poetry a vigour and passion which sprang from

the soil. He was first and foremost a Holsteiner. When the Danes overran Holstein in 1850, he would not accept Danish rule and took service under the Prussian Government. For fourteen years he was in exile, but in 1864 the Danes were driven out and he could return. What all this meant to Storm may be judged from the poem which he wrote in the first bitterness of departure from home:

" Kein Wort, auch nicht das kleinste, kann ich sagen,
Wozu das Herz den vollen Schlag verwehrt ;
Die Stunde drängt, gerüstet steht der Wagen,
Es ist die Fahrt der Heimat abgekehrt.

Geht immerhin—denn euere Tat ist euer—
Und widerruft, was einst das Herz gebot ;
Und kauft, wenn dieser Preis euch nicht zu teuer,
Dafür euch in der Heimat euer Brot !

Ich aber kann des Landes nicht, des eignen,
In Schmerz verstummte Klagen missverstehn ;
Ich kann die stillen Gräber nicht verleugnen.
Wie tief sie jetzt in Unkraut auch vergehn.

Du, deren zarte Augen mich befragen,—
Der dich mir gab, gesegnet sei der Tag !
Lass nur dein Herz an meinem Herzen schlagen
Und zage nicht ! Es ist derselbe Schlag.

Es strömt die Luft—die Knaben stehn und lauschen,
Vom Strand herüber dringt ein Möwenschrei ;
Das ist die Flut ! Das ist des Meeres Rauschen ;
Ihr kennt es wohl ; wir waren oft dabei.

Von meinem Arm in dieser letzten Stunde
Blickt einmal noch ins weite Land hinaus
Und merkt es wohl, es steht auf diesem Grunde,
Wo wir auch weilen, unser Vaterhaus.

Wir scheiden jetzt, bis dieser Zeit Beschwerde
Ein andrer Tag, ein besserer, gesühnt ;
Denn Raum ist auf der heimatlichen Erde
Für Fremde nur und was den Fremden dient.

Doch ist's das flehendste von den Gebeten,
Ihr mögt dereinst, wenn mir es nicht vergönnt,
Mit festem Fuss auf diese Scholle treten,
Von der sich jetzt mein heisses Auge trennt !—

Und du, mein Kind, mein jüngstes, dessen Wiege
Auch noch auf diesem teueren Boden stand,
Hör mich !—denn alles andere ist Lüge—
Kein Mann gedeihet ohne Vaterland !

Kannst du den Sinn, den diese Worte führen,
Mit deiner Kinderseele nicht verstehn,
So soll es wie ein Schauer dich berühren
Und wie ein Pulsschlag in dein Leben gehn."

" No words have I, not one, this stroke to parry,
Full on my heart I feel the whelming blow ;
The hour runs on, the laden wagons tarry,
And turning, from our father's house we go.

Who will, may stay—is not the deed your doing ?
Unsay what bidden by your heart you said.
Buy for yourselves, unless the bargain ruing,
At such a cost in your own land, your bread.

But I may not refuse to hear the sighing,
The stifled sorrow of the stricken land,
May not disown the graves so stilly lying,
Though now the weeds above their ruins stand.

O true and tender eyes in silence questing,
I bless the hour that made you aye mine own !
Heart, on my heart a little moment resting,
Why should you fear—for sure they beat as one ?

The boys look seaward, and a breeze is blowing
Clear from the strand is borne the seagulls' cry ;
The tide runs up—you hear the water flowing,
How often have we watched it, you and I !

See in the distance, where I point my finger
O mark it well, the house and garden fair.
Remember, wheresoe'er we wanderers linger,
Our home, our father's house is always there.

We wander till for this day's grief and danger
Far other and far better days atone,
No room is in our land but for the stranger,
The stranger and the stranger's man alone.

This be my passionate prayer—may it be granted
To you, my sons, if 'tis not granted me,
That once again your feet be firmly planted
Upon that threshold I no more may see !

And you, my youngest, in your cradle crying
Which late upon this holy soil did stand,
Hear me—all else is mockery and lying—
No man may thrive without a fatherland !

My child, my child, the burden of that saying
Your little mind will slowly comprehend,
Until at last, your inmost spirit swaying
It pulses through your life till life shall end."

The annexation of Holstein to Prussia was not what he had hoped for, but for the rest of his life he was at home. His absence had only strengthened his longing for the heaths and marshes of the North Sea Coast, and his poem on his native town breathes a stronger feeling than is found in mere nature poetry.

" Am grauen Strand, am grauen Meer
Und seitab liegt die Stadt ;
Der Nebel drückt die Dächer schwer,
Und durch die Stille braust das Meer
Eintönig um die Stadt.

Es rauscht kein Wald, es schlägt im Mai
Kein Vogel ohn' Unterlass ;
Die Wandergans mit hartem Schrei
Nur fliegt in Herbstesnacht vorbei,
Am Strande weht das Gras.

Doch hängt mein ganzes Herz an dir,
Du graue Stadt am Meer ;
Der Jugend Zauber für und für
Ruht lächelnd doch auf dir, auf dir,
Du graue Stadt am Meer."

" Grey is the sea, and grey the shore,
And lonely lies the town,
The mists bear hard on roof and door,
The sea is wailing evermore,
About the silent town.

May brings no leaves to stir and sigh,
No song continual,
The wild geese raise a bitter cry
As past on autumn nights they fly,
Grass waves on the sea wall.

Yet all my heart longs sore for thee,
Thou grey, sea-girdled town,
The glamour youth alone can see,
Lies smiling still on thee, on thee,
Thou grey, sea-girdled town."

A man bound as Storm was to his native soil was naturally akin to the folk-poets. One of his lyrics may be set beside Mörike's "Forsaken Lassie," as a folk-song rendered with greater art and even greater intensity than was the wont of the older singers.

ELISABETH

" Meine Mutter hat's gewollt,
Den andern ich nehmen sollt' ;
Was ich zuvor besessen,
Mein Herz sollt' es vergessen,
Das hat es nicht gewollt.

Meine Mutter klag' ich an,
Sie hat nicht wohlgetan ;
Was sonst in Ehren stünde,
Nun ist es worden Sünde.
Was fang' ich an ?

Für all mein Stolz und Freud'
Gewonnen hab' ich Leid.
Ach, wär' das nicht geschehen,
Ach, könnt' ich betteln gehen
Über die braune Heid' ! "

" My mother bids me choose
The other, and refuse
My own, my dearest lover,
Then all's forgot and over ;
Not so my heart may choose.

I chide my mother still,
For she has done but ill,
What else were honour blameless,
Is now sin, foul and shameless,
Do what I will.

My pride and joy are fled,
And grief is come instead.
Were't undone altogether,
Fain would I tramp the heather,
And beg for bitter bread."

(II) THE LAST FIFTY YEARS

Although the German public was slow to recognise the merits of Mörike, Keller, Meyer and Storm, it felt the inadequacy of the Munich School, and in the eighteen-eighties a reaction set in. A new Germany, imperial and industrial, was arising; social problems were pressing for solution, and it seemed absurd that German poets should ignore the life of their own day and write as if they were in the eighteenth century. Unfortunately the Naturalists were more successful in laying down principles of art than in applying their principles to poetry; but the movement affected genuine poets such as Liliencron and Dehmel. Then Germany, lying between Russia and France, was affected by the poets and critics of the latter and the novelists of the former. Philosophers, like Nietsche (who was himself a poet), and artists also exercised an influence on literary developments. In the eighteen-nineties came a neo-romantic movement, reacting against the naturalism of the eighties and announcing the worship of beauty. With all this there has been a growing tendency to break away from traditional forms, to enlarge the poetic vocabulary and in general to experiment as freely as possible, so that to-day we find the same clash and confusion of styles in German as in English poetry.

The most conspicuous among German poets of the closing years of the nineteenth century was

Detlev von Liliencron[1] (1844–1909), almost as conspicuous as Heine had been in his day. Not that the work of the two poets is comparable, but since Heine no German poet had put so much of his personality into his poetry; and Liliencron's personality was more attractive to the average German than Heine's. Heine was a renegade Jew, and might almost be called a renegade German with a strong taint of blackguardism; Liliencron was an officer and a baron of old family, abounding in vitality and good-fellowship, an ardent but not too faithful lover ("Thank heaven," says one of his critics, "Liliencron has not loved faithfully"), a devoted admirer of his country and her institutions from the Kaiser downwards. He served in the Prussian army and was wounded in the Austro-Prussian and Franco-Prussian Wars. Then he emigrated to America, in the hope of mending his fortunes, for he had inherited little beyond a title. The hope was vain; the baron is supposed to have scraped a living by teaching the pianoforte. In 1877 he returned to Germany, and on his return it seemed as if a well-spring of poetry had been unsealed. This fountain was never to fail till his death.

Liliencron was in poetry altogether a lyrist. He had no dramatic or epic gift at all. German critics shake their heads over his lack of "Idealismus." But everything which he saw or heard or felt with interest, he communicated with an infectious ardour. "When I write poetry," he once said, "I am in the most glorious and exultant mood. I run about the room, whistle, sing and smoke without ceasing." One can well believe it;

[1] *Sämtliche Werke*, Schuster und Loeffler, Berlin.

his quietest descriptive pieces stir the blood more than Geibel's assurance that the sun is darkened. And Liliencron never attempts to make ardour and geniality supply the place of art. Professor Lewisohn in his book on The Spirit of Modern German Literature, says very truly, " This matchless vision of the concrete is the chief note of Liliencron's style. The flicker of campfires, the creaking of a saddle-girth, blue smoke over the roofs of men, the rustle of a bird in the reeds, fog on a moorland—what other poet has rendered such things with so brief and effortless a finality ? "

Liliencron's irruption into German letters caused the same kind of sensation as that of Mr. Kipling into late Victorian literature. And his appeal to the literary and non-literary public was as irresistible. The two following poems deal with episodes of war, but he wrote with the same power and ardour of a sail in rough weather, or a dance at an inn and a consequent love affair. The first poem refers to the Battle of Kolin in 1757:

WER WEISS WO

" Auf Blut und Leichen, Schutt und Qualm,
Auf rosszerstampften Sommerhalm
Die Sonne schien.
Es sank die Nacht. Die Schlacht ist aus,
Und mancher kehrte nicht nach Haus
Einst von Kolin.

Ein Junker auch, ein Knabe noch,
Der heut' das erste Pulver roch,
Er musste dahin.
Wie hoch er auch die Fahne schwang
Der Tod in seinen Arm ihn zwang,
Er musste dahin.

Ihm nahe lag ein frommes Buch,
Das stets der Junker bei sich trug,
Am Degenknauf.
Ein Grenadier von Bevern fand
Den kleinen erdbeschmutzten Band
Und hob ihn auf.

Und brachte heim mit schnellem Fuss
Dem Vater diesen letzten Gruss,
Der klang nicht froh.
Dann schrieb hinein die Zitterhand :
' Kolin. Mein Sohn verscharrt im Sand.
Wer weiss wo.'

Und der gesungen dieses Lied,
Und der es liest, im Leben zieht
Noch frisch und froh.
Doch einst bin ich und bist auch du
Verscharrt im Sand, zur ewigen Ruh.
Wer weiss wo."

" On broken bodies, dust and fire,
On corn that horses stamped in mire,
The sun arose.
The night is spent, the fight is done,
Ah, never homeward many a one
From Kolin goes.

A youngster too—a boy—no more—
Powder he never smelt before,
He too is sped ;
High waved his colours yestermorn,
But him Death's arm away has borne,
He too is sped.

And close to him a Bible lay,
At his sword hilt until that day,
He kept the Book.
A grenadier of Bevern's found
The volume soiled upon the ground,
With speed he took.

The tidings to the father's hall
(Heavy the greeting) and withal
This token bare.
The father wrote with shaking hand,
'Kolin—my son—entombed in sand,
Who knows where?'

And he who sang this tragic song,
And he who reads are live and strong,
And life is fair.
But soon will you and soon will I,
Entombed in sand for ever lie,
Who knows where?"

The second poem is an even more characteristic example of his style:

KRIEG UND FRIEDE

" Ich stand an eines Gartens Rand
Und schaute in ein herrlich Land,
Das, weit geländet, vor mir blüht,
Drin heiss die Erntesonne glüht.
Und Arm in Arm, es war kein Traum,
Mein Wirt und ich am Apfelbaum;
Wir lauschten einer Nachtigall,
Und Friede, Friede überall.

. . . . .

Einst sah ich den metallnen Strang
Zerstört, zerrissen meilenlang.
Und wo ich nun in Blumen stund,
War damals wildzerwühlter Grund.

Der Sommermorgen glänzte schön
Wie heute ; glitzernd von den Höhn,
' Den ganzen Tag mit Sack und Pack,'
Brach nieder aus Verhau, Verhack
Zum kühnsten Sturm, ein weisses Meer,
Des Feindes wundervolles Heer.
Ich stützte, wie aus Erz gezeugt,
Mich auf den Säbel, vorgebeugt,
Mit weiten Augen, offnem Mund,
Als starrt' ich in den Höllenschlund.
Nun sind sie da ! ' Schnellfeuer ! ' ' Steht ! '
Wie hoch im Rauch die Fahne weht !
Und Mann an Mann, hinauf, hinab,
Und mancher sinkt in Graus und Grab.
Zu Boden stürz' ich, einer sticht
Und zerrt mich, ich erraff' mich nicht,
Und um mich, vor mir, unter mir
Ein furchtbar Ringen, Gall und Gier.
Und über unserm wüsten Knaul
Bäumt sich ein scheu gewordner Gaul.
Ich seh' der Vorderhufe Blitz,
Blutfestgetrockneten Sporenritz,
Den Gurt, den angespritzten Kot,
Der aufgeblähten Nüstern Rot.
Und zwischen uns mit Klang und Kling
Platzt der Granate Eisenring :
Ein Drache brüllt, die Erde birst,
Einfällt der Weltenhimmelfirst.
Es ächst, es stöhnt, und Schutt und Staub
Umhüllen Tod und Lorbeerlaub.

Ich stand an eines Gartens Rand
Und schaute in ein herrlich Land,
Das ausgebreitet vor mir liegt,
Vom Friedensfächer eingewiegt.
Und Arm in Arm, es ist kein Traum,
Mein Wirt und ich am Apfelbaum ;

Wir lauschen einer Nachtigall,
Und Rosen, Rosen überall."

WAR AND PEACE

" Now at a garden's edge I stand,
And gaze upon a glorious land,
That, stretching out for miles and miles,
In harvest sunshine glows and smiles.
My host and I link arms and we
Watch ('tis no dream) the apple tree,
A nightingale is singing there,
And peace, and peace is everywhere.

In the distance the poet sees an excursion train bringing crowds of tourists come to spend money freely.

But once upon a summer morn,
I saw for miles the metals torn,
And where in flowers now I stand,
Was nought but devastated land,
Fair as to-day that morning gleamed
On us the glittering sunlight streamed,
In heavy marching order we—
Then broke from out the abattis
Wave upon wave in white storm tossed
The enemy—a wondrous host.
I stiffened as if turned to wood,
And, leaning on my sword, I stood
With mouth agape and eyes astare
As though the pit of hell were there.
See, here they come—now steady—Fire !
Our colours mid the smoke rise higher,
And man to man, above, beneath,
They sink in horror and in death.
I fall—one stabs me as I lie,
And drags me, helpless—nought can I,

And all around, behind, before,
They grapple in the deadly stour.
High o'er the mellay, suddenly
Rears up a startled horse ; I see
The sparks that from his forefeet fly,
The spur-wounds where the blood is dry,
The girth, the mire all splashed and spread,
The swollen nostrils, angry, red,
And lo, between, with clang and cling,
Crashes a shell with iron ring,
A dragon roars, high earth is hurled,
The heavens fall to crush the world,
Earth sighs, and as it groans and heaves,
Dust covers Death and laurel leaves.

. . . . . .

Now at the garden's edge I stand,
And gaze upon the glorious land,
For, stretching far before my eyes,
Cradled in peace, in peace it lies.
My host and I link arms and we
Watch ('tis no dream) the apple tree,
A nightingale is singing there,
And roses, roses everywhere."

Liliencron founded no school, but his vigour, clearness and grip of concrete things were bound to influence his younger contemporaries. Two show obvious traces of this influence—Gustav Falke[1] (1853–1916) and Börries Freiherr von Münchhausen, who was born in 1874 and is still living. Falke's later poetry bears less resemblance to Liliencron's than his earlier, and he was of a more meditative and reflective temperament. But even poems like the following would probably have been written differently had it not been for Liliencron.

[1] *Gedichte*, Georg Westermann, Braunschweig.

" Ich träumte mich auf einem bangen Weg,
Auf einem hohen, schwindelschmalen Steg,
Der führte mich bis an das Himmelstor.
Da stand ich lange, ohne Mut, davor.

Und zitternd griff ich nach dem rost'gen Ring,
Das Himmelsglöcklein an zu läuten fing ;
Mein Herz erschrak vor seinem hellen Klang,
Ein armer Sünder auf dem letzten Gang.

Dann rasselte ein grosses Schlüsselbund,
Ein Knarren, bis der Himmel offen stund ;
Doch hascht' ich nur von seiner Herrlichkeit
Mit scheuem Blinzeln einen Streifen breit,

Ein Wiesengrün und einen Engelsfuss.
Sankt Peter barg mir jeden weitern Gruss,
Mit breitem Rücken und erschreckte mich
Mit barscher Frage : ' Freund, wer schickte dich ? '

' Mich schickte keiner.' ' Und was suchst du hier ? '
' Nach Erdennot ein ruhiges Quartier,
Ein Flügelpaar und himmliches Gewand,
Ein Tröpfchen Tau aus Gottes hohler Hand.'

' Hast du zu solchen Dingen auch ein Recht,
Warst du auf Erden ein getreuer Knecht ? '
' Ich war Poet.' ' Und kommst zu Fuss hier an ?
Wo hast du deine Flügel hingetan ? '

' Ich schämte mich, weil sie so sehr beschmutzt
Und ihre schönsten Federn arg gestutzt,
Weil durch das Fliegen nach dem Flitterkranz
Des Menschenruhmes dunkel ward ihr Glanz.'

'Und deinen Kranz?' 'Ich hab' ihn abgelegt,
Dass man mit andern ihn zum Kehricht fegt,
Und komm nun nackt und ohne Glorienschein.'
Da sprach der Pförtner gütig: 'Komm, tritt ein.'"

"In dreams I passed along a path that led
Across a bridge, high, narrow, full of dread,
And brought me last of all to Heaven's gate.
There, faint of heart, must I with longing wait.

Trembling, I touched the ring of rusty steel;
The little bell of heaven began to peal;
I heard it chiming clear and needs must quail,
A poor old sinner on his last lone trail.

A bunch of keys that rattled I could hear,
A creaking hinge—the way to Heaven was clear,
But of its loveliness and majesty
A narrow strip was all I could espy,

A meadow green, an angel's foot—no more;
A mighty pair of shoulders filled the door,—
Saint Peter's self—again I stood in fear,
So stern his question, 'Friend, who sent you here?'

'No one,' I answered. 'Why then have you come?'
'After Earth's woes I seek a quiet home.
I ask for wings—for heavenly raiment—and
A drop of dew from God's own hollowed Hand.'

'And dare you plead a right to such reward,
Were you on earth a servant of the Lord?'
'I was a poet.' 'But on foot you came,
What have you done with them, your wings of flame?'

'I was ashamed—they were so deeply soiled
And all their fairest feathers clipped and spoiled.
I flew for men's applause—a tinsel crown.
Their sheen was tarnished and I laid them down.'

'Where is your garland?' 'That I have not kept,
Let it remain where other trash is swept.
Naked I come—no glory on my head'—
'Come in, come in,' the kindly Porter said."

Münchhausen applied Liliencron's vivid and forceful style to the heroic ballad with such success that he is probably the most popular lyrist now living in Germany. One may say that he has taken Liliencron's place as the plain man's poet. The following verses show his skill in the pure lyric :

STRASSENLIED

"Es liegt etwas auf den Strassen im Land umher,
In Welschland und in Britannien und am Meer,
Am Rhein und wo die Scholle der Newa splittert wie Glas,
Es liegt etwas auf den Strassen, ich weiss nicht was.

Ich hab' auf den Strassen verlaufen sieben Paar Schuh,
Mein Stecken blieb immer derselbe, mein Herz dazu,
Ich wanderte sieben Jahre durch Regen und Sonnenlicht,
Und die Strassen wussten mein Glück und sagten es nicht.

Es pfeift eine Drossel in Thule am Holderstrauch,
Und hab' ich Land Elend gefunden, so find ich Thule auch,
Die Drossel weiss meiner Sehnsucht süssesten Reim,
Und alle Strassen im Lande sagen : 'Kehr heim!'"

A Song of the Highroads

" There's something on the high roads that waits for me,
In Britain or in unco lands or yont the sea,
Whaur rins the Rhine or Neva's floes like gless maun split and grind ;
There's a something on the high roads I ne'er can find.

I hae rin thro' seeven pair o' shune on roads, but aye
The staff I carried was the same, the hert forbye,
Stravaiging mair than seeven year in tempest and in shine,
The highroads wadna tell, though they kent my fortune fine.

A mavis sings in Thule, on a bourtree set
I hae fund the Land o' Poortith ; O I'll find my Thule yet
The mavis kens the sweetest rhyme for a' my hert can frame
And a' the highroads i' the warld cry 'Hame, hame, hame.' "

From *Balladen und Ritterliche Lieder*, Fleischel, Berlin.

It would be difficult to find a better example of the " naïve " poet than Liliencron, and his " sentimental " counterpart was Richard Dehmel[1] (1863–1920). Dehmel was an intellectual of the intellectuals. For five years he studied philosophy, science and social economy at Berlin, and all through his poetic career he tried to fuse his philosophy in his poetry. He admired Liliencron's intense grasp of the concrete. " My good and bad luck," he wrote to Liliencron, " have been my ever-reflecting consciousness." And again, " All that is visible, that have I learned from thee, Detlev, from thee ! Through thee, thou child of primitive

[1] *Gesammelte Werke*, Fischer, Berlin.

man, I first learned to see ! Before that how deaf and blind I was ! " Had it not been for Dehmel's troublesome " consciousness " he might have succeeded on the same lines as Liliencron, for his perceptions were almost as vivid and more delicate. But he wished to realise a higher unity—to bring the universe, so to speak, within the sphere of his poetry. Hence his reach always tended to exceed his grasp. In one of his most ambitious poems, " Zwei Menschen " (Two Souls), he is not content to describe with great skill and power the relations and the surroundings of the two lovers; he tries to bring them into unity with all things, to utter the magic words " We World." Whether he himself reached this pitch is doubtful; certainly his readers cannot. His sociological poetry is more successful; it is easier to identify oneself with Humanity, to say " We Men," than to embrace the cosmos and say " We World." Our preoccupation with social problems has produced surprisingly few good poems, but half a dozen at least of Dehmel's must be included in those few. One is a supremely moving account of a man, his wife and their baby, who travelled as fourth-class passengers in an emigrant train. They had sold everything, and were on their way to America. Even if the change and the new life were hard for them, their little one would reap the benefit. But the baby dies on the mother's knee. Another poem relates the tragedy of a coachman and a seamstress in a garret, and the comment of the doctor who tells the story is true psychologically, while it enforces the poet's moral— " And a fear stole through my heart, as if I were to blame for all this sorrow."

The most popular of these poems is " Der

Arbeitsmann" (The Toiler), which I have rendered in Broad Scots, since the Scottish working class is the only proletariat in Great Britain which has expressed itself in poetry. To appreciate Dehmel's insistence on leisure for the workers, it must be remembered that till within the last few years working hours in Germany were very much longer than in this country, and that the greatest benefit conferred on the working classes by the German Revolution has been the eight-hour day.

Der Arbeitsmann

" Wir haben ein Bett, wir haben ein Kind,
Mein Weib !
Wir haben auch Arbeit, und gar zu zweit,
Und haben die Sonne und Regen und Wind,
Und uns fehlt nur eine Kleinigkeit,
Um so frei zu sein, wie die Vögel sind :
Nur Zeit.

Wenn wir Sonntags durch die Felder gehn,
Mein Kind,
Und über den Ähren weit und breit
Das blaue Schwalbenvolk blitzen sehn
O, dann fehlt uns nicht das bisschen Kleid,
Um so schön zu sein, wie die Vögel sind :
Nur Zeit.

Nur Zeit ! Wir wittern Gewitterwind,
Wir Volk.
Nur eine kleine Ewigkeit ;
Uns fehlt ja nichts, mein Weib, mein Kind,
Als all das, was durch uns gedeiht,
Um so kühn zu sein, wie die Vögel sind.
Nur Zeit ! "

"We hae a bed, we hae a wean,
Guidwife.
We hae oor wark, enow for twa,
We hae the sun, the win', the rain,
We want ae thing, an' that's but sma'
To be like birdies free an' fain,
Juist time.

On Sundays when on Shanks's mare,
Wee lass,
Oot owre the fields we rin an' ca'
An' chase blue-backit swallows there,
It's no the claes we want ava'
To be like birdies free an' fair,
But time.

Juist time—we'll thole the blasts an' cauld,
Puir folk,
A wee bit o' Eternity,
Gie's that. The lack in hoose an' hauld
O' a' oor toil has made, we'll dree;
But we're like birdies free an' bauld,
Wi' time."

The lyrical form compelled Dehmel to be simple and concrete, and his most perfect work is in his shorter poems.

In 1914 the poet, who was then fifty-one, joined the German Army as a volunteer, and served all through the war as a private. His reason was characteristic of the man who had striven to attain union with the "Folk." "Of course we are all responsible for the great crash of humanity, and just we intellectual pioneers with our spiritual excavations which lay many new foundations but unfortunately undermine old ones. That was

really the reason I went as a volunteer—I wished to show by a symbolic act that the intellectual worker has the damnable duty and obligation to share with his body as with his soul in the fight for the future of his people and also to atone with them for the sins of the past."

In 1920 Dehmel died of the bursting of a blood-vessel—a result of the war strain.

" Out of this fateful union with his people," says Dr. Witkop, in *Deutsche Dichtung der Gegenwart*, " there came to Dehmel in his last years some poems in which the simplicity and sincerity of the old folk-songs and the depth of life and consciousness of the new Humanity break through impressively." In these it seems as if the division between Dehmel's poetry and philosophy were at last healed. I translate the example which Dr. Witkop quotes:

Die Verhüllten

" Der goldne Schlaf, der schwarze Tod,
Die trafen sich ums Abendrot.
Die Heide hing voll Höhenrauch,
Ein Vogel rief im Holderstrauch :
Zieh mit !

Es sprach der Schlaf : ' Ich bring ' die Ruh,
Ich häng' die Leidenstunden zu,
Ich hülle um die Tagesschlacht
Den goldnen Flor der Gottesnacht ;
Zieh mit ! '

Es sprach der Tod : ' Ich tu' wie du,
Ich bring' auch dir die Gottesruh,
Ich hüll' um allen Graus der Zeit
Den schwarzen Schleier Nichtigkeit ;
Zieh mit ! '

Er reichte sein Gewand ihm dar.
Der andre sah, wie leicht es war.
Er gab zum Tausch das seine hin
Und hauchte : ' Sieh, wie dein ich bin,
Zieh mit ! '

Die Heide hing voll Höhenrauch,
Der Vogel schwieg im Holderstrauch.
Es zogen still gen Morgenrot,
Der schwarze Schlaf, der goldne Tod ;
Zieh mit ! "

The Veiled Figures

" Once golden Sleep and swarthy Death
Met, as it chanced, upon the heath.
The eve was red, mists floated free,
A bird sang in the elder tree,
' Come too ; come too.'

Sleep said : ' I rest the heart and brain,
I hide the weary hours of pain,
I throw across the day's long fight,
The golden veil of God's own night.'
' Come too ; come too.'

Death spake : ' Lo, I do e'en as thou,
And God's own rest I bring thee now,
For o'er time's horror and distress,
I cast black palls of nothingness.'
' Come too ; come too.'

To Sleep he gave his mantle grey,
The other saw how light it lay
And gave in turn his golden gown,
And whispered : ' I am all thine own.'
' Come too ; come too.'

The morn was red, mist floated free,
The bird was silent in the tree,
And still they passed across the heath,
Both golden Sleep and swarthy Death.
'Come too; come too.'"

Though Dehmel was not, strictly speaking, a "Naturalist," he had been greatly influenced by that movement. The most prominent and the most interesting lyric poet now living, Stefan George (b. 1868) came from the Neo-Romantic School. In the early nineties he announced a very definite programme. Art was to exist for art's sake. Schemes for improving the world and dreams of universal happiness belonged to another sphere than that of poetry. Poets must turn to art and leave to others the application of art to life. And George spared no pains in the pursuit of art; he strove for perfection in metre, music, language, in all points of poetic style. He was much influenced by the English Pre-Raphaelites and the later French lyric poets, and he tried to enrich the German poetical vocabulary by judicious borrowings and adaptations.

It was almost a corollary to George's critical propositions that Art and Beauty were to be for a few choice spirits; and he deliberately tried to make his work difficult to the ordinary reader, to be the poet's poet. But as he attained a mastery of form, he turned gradually from art to life. In 1899 he published a series of lyrics, which showed a tendency to return to his own people and the simple joys of his Homeland—the Rhine country. The verses that follow illustrate the transition.

" Du wirst nicht mehr die lauten fahrten preisen
Wo falsche flut gefährlich dich umstürmt
Und wo der abgrund schroffe felsen türmt
Um deren spitzen himmels adler kreisen.

In diesen einfachen gefilden lern
Den hauch der den zu kühlen frühling lindert
Und den begreifen der die schwüle mindert
Und ihrem kindesstammeln horche gern !

. . . . . .

Schon lockt nicht mehr das Wunder der lagunen

Das allumworbene trümmergrosse Rom
Wie herber eichen duft und rebenblüten
Wie sie die Deines volkes hort behüten—
Wie Deine wogen—lebengrüner Strom ! "

" Thy songs of distant journeys now are over,
Where false and perilous floods around thee storm,
And falls the abyss and towering mountains form
Those pinnacles where eagles wheel and hover.

In this plain countryside well mayst thou know,
That breath, the bitter chill of spring assuaging,
Those gentle airs that tame the summer's raging,
And gladly hear their childish lisping low.

. . . . . .

No more yon Wonder of lagoons may lure thee

Nor she whom all men woo, high, ruined Rome,
As the sharp scent of oaks and vines that blossom,
Guarding thy people's treasure in their bosom,
Or as thy waves, thou living stream of Home."

From *Der Teppich des Lebens*, Georg Bondi, Berlin.

So, beginning as a mere artist, George became a judge and a prophet. A few months before the outbreak of the Great War, he delivered God's judgment on the world:

" Aus Purpurgluten sprach des Himmels Zorn :
Mein Blick ist abgewandt von diesem Volk.
Siech ist der Geist ! Tot ist die Tat."

" God's anger spake from out the purple glow,
Surely Mine eye is turned from this people,
Sick is their spirit ; dead are all their deeds."

And in a vision he saw armies marching, weapons clattering, all the cries of war.

" Zehntausend muss der heilige Wahnsinn schlagen,
Zehntausend muss die heilige Seuche raffen,
Zehntausende der heilige Krieg."

" For holy Madness will smite tens of thousands,
And holy Sickness will seize tens of thousands,
And holy War will slay his tens of thousands."

And in 1917, when the vision had become a reality, he wrote:

" Zu jubeln ziemt nicht ; kein Triumph wird sein
Nur viele Untergänge ohne Würde.

. . . . . .

Keiner, der heute ruft und meint zu führen,
Merkt, wie er tastet im Verhängnis, keiner
Erspäht ein blasses Glühn vom Morgenrot.

Weit minder wundert es, dass so viel sterben
Als dass so viel zu leben wagt.

. . . . . .

Ein Volk ist tot, wenn seine Götter tot sind."

" Joy is unseemly ; there will be no triumph,
But many perishing unworthily—

. . . . . .

No man who calls to-day and fain would lead us,
May touch the hidden things of Destiny,
No man may see the palest glow of morning,
Less wonderful it is that crowds are dying
Than that so many dare to live.

. . . . . .

A people dies whene'er its gods are dead."

But he foresaw that the " spirit of the holy youth of our people " would restore the ruined world.

George remains too austere to be a popular poet, and he may not be such a great poet as some of his younger contemporaries think, but as Dr. Witkop puts it, " he is a watch tower and a beacon in the chaotic sea of a struggling and developing Europe."

A less austere neo-Romantic poet is Hugo von Hofmannsthal[1] (1874–1929). Most of his work is dramatic in form, but his lyrics are perhaps the crown of his achievement. With great powers of language, melody, and indeed imagination, he lacked that certainty and assurance which George possessed at all stages of his career.

" The essence of our age," he said, in a passage of self-revelation, " is ambiguity and uncertainty. It cannot rest on the transitory, for it knows that it

[1] *Gesammelte Gedichte*, Insel Verlag, Leipzig.

is transitory, when other generations believed that they had stability. A slight chronic giddiness vibrates through the epoch." This failure to find permanent mental foothold affects his lyric poetry least, since moods of despondency and uncertainty may find exquisite expression in the lyric. His lines "Über Vergänglichkeit" (On Transience) are full of his peculiar philosophy:

"Noch spür' ich ihren Atem auf den Wangen:
Wie kann das sein, dass, diese nahen Tage
Fort sind, für immer fort, und ganz vergangen?

Dies ist ein Ding, das keiner voll aussinnt,
Und viel zu grauenvoll, als dass man klage:
Dass alles gleitet und vorüberrinnt,

Und dass mein eignes Ich, durch nichts gehemmt,
Herüberglitt aus einem kleinen Kind
Mir wie ein Hund unheimlich stumm und fremd.

Dann: dass ich auch vor hundert Jahren war
Und meine Ahnen, die im Totenhemd,
Mit mir verwandt sind wie mein eignes Haar,

So eins mit mir als wie mein eignes Haar."

"O still their breath upon my cheek is falling.
How can these yesterdays that are so near
Be gone for ever, gone beyond recalling?

None dares consider, no one ever may
('Tis far too terrible for sigh or tear)
That everything must pass and glide away;

Enclosed in nothingness, my Self, the I
Came from a little child in arms who lay,
To me all unfamiliar, dumb and shy.

Then I too lived in centuries that were
And all my forebears, in their shrouds who lie,
Are close to me, close as my very hair.

Are one with me, one as my very hair."

Characteristic too is the poem entitled "Erlebnis" (An Experience).

"Mit silbergrauem Dufte war das Tal
Der Dämmerung erfüllt, wie wenn der Mond
Durch Wolken sickert. Doch es war nicht Nacht.
Mit silbergrauem Duft des dunklen Tales
Verschwammen meine dämmernden Gedanken,
Und still versank ich in dem webenden,
Durchsicht'gen Meere und verliess das Leben.
Wie wunderbare Blumen waren da
Mit Kelchen dunkelglühend! Pflanzendickicht,
Durch das ein gelbrot Licht wie von Topasen
In warmen Strömen drang und glomm. Das Ganze
War angefüllt mit einem tiefen Schwellen
Schwermütiger Musik. Und dieses wusst' ich,
Obgleich ich's nicht begreife, doch ich wusst' es:
Das ist der Tod. Der ist Musik geworden,
Gewaltig sehnend, süss und dunkelglühend,
Verwandt der tiefsten Schwermut.
Aber seltsam!
Ein namenloses Heimweh weinte lautlos
In meiner Seele nach dem Leben, weinte,
Wie einer weint, wenn er auf grossem Seeschiff
Mit gelben Riesensegeln gegen Abend
Auf dunkelblauem Wasser an der Stadt,
Der Vaterstadt, vorüberfährt. Da sieht er

Die Gassen, hört die Brunnen rauschen, riecht
Den Duft der Fliederbüsche, sieht sich selber,
Ein Kind, am Ufer stehn, mit Kindesaugen,
Die ängstlich sind und weinen wollen, sieht
Durchs offne Fenster Licht in seinem Zimmer—
Das grosse Seeschiff aber trägt ihn weiter
Auf dunkelblauem Wasser lautlos gleitend
Mit gelben, fremdgeformten Riesensegeln."

" Vapours of silvery grey the valley filled
With glimmering light, as when thro' clouds the moon
Gleams fitfully. Only it was not night.
And with the silver mist of the dark valley
Fused and commingled all my gleaming thoughts.

Then silently I sank into the currents
Of that pellucid sea, forsaking life.
How wondrous in that valley were the flowers
With hearts all darkly glowing. Thickets stood,
Where thro' light golden-red, as from a topaz,
In warm streams pressing gloomed. And lo, the valley
Was filled from end to end with a deep swelling
Of melancholy music. And I knew it;
I could not understand, but still I knew it.
'Twas Death itself. For Death is turned to Music,
Mightily yearning, sweet and darkly glowing,
Akin to deepest sadness.
But how strange!
A nameless longing wept within my soul,
Wept silently, homesick for life again,
As one may weep, who in a mighty ship,
With great and golden sails at evening passes
On dark blue waters by his own dear town,
His father's town. Again he sees the pavements,
Hears streams that rustle, smells again the fragrance
Of lilac bushes, sees himself a child
Standing upon the shore with childish eyes,

Afraid and weeping-ripe. Again he sees
An open window, his old room a-lit,
But the great ship must bear him ever on
Silently gliding over dark blue waters
With gold mysterious gigantic sails."

Again one is impressed by the swiftness with which literary movements sweep across Europe. The melancholy of Hofmannsthal's mood, his love of twilight, his symbolism, his sense of mystery, may be paralleled in Maeterlinck and in the writers of the Celtic Renaissance in these Islands.

And yet this sophisticated modern could recapture the careless ease of the folk-song. Here is one of the " Kleine Lieder " (Little Songs):

" Die Liebste sprach : ' Ich halt' dich nicht,
Du hast mir nichts geschworn.
Die Menschen soll man halten nicht,
Sind nicht zur Treu geborn.

Zieh deine Strassen hin, mein Freund,
Beschau dir Land um Land,
In vielen Betten ruh dich aus,
Viel Frauen nimm bei der Hand.

Wo dir der Wein zu sauer ist,
Da trink du Malvasier,
Und wenn mein Mund dir süsser ist,
So komm nur wieder zu mir ! ' "

" ' I will not hold thee,' said my Dear,
' To me nought hast thou sworn,
O who would strive to hold a man,
For truth they ne'er were born.

Now, go thine own sweet way, my friend,
Wander from land to land,
Rest thee where'er thy pleasure is,
Give whom thou wilt thy hand.

And if thou find the wine too sour
Drink of the malvoisie,
And if my lips are sweeter still,
Come home again to me.' "

There is a third poet, contemporary with George and Hofmannsthal, whose work has certain affinities with theirs and who, like them, is regarded by some younger poets as a master. This is Rainer Maria Rilke (1875–1926), who was born in Prague, the last representative of a noble but impoverished family. Instead of entering the army, which would have been the natural career for one of his traditions, he devoted himself to the study of art and letters and wandered through Europe.

Rilke's early poems resemble those of Hofmannsthal in their delicate and sensitive perception, their brooding melancholy and their air of twilight and mystery. " I am at home," he says, " between day and dream." From the first he showed an extraordinary command of metrical form; his melodies were as new and enchanting in German poetry as those of Swinburne in English; it is impossible to reproduce their sweetness and variety of rhyme and assonance in another tongue. In this period he was greatly influenced by the English and Italian Pre-Raphaelites.

The second dominating influence was that of the Russian writers, particularly Dostoevski. In 1906 he published a volume of religious poetry—*Das Stundenbuch*, or *The Book of Hours*, wherein he

describes the struggles of a Russian monk to realise God, the God Who exists in all things and in Whom all things exist. These poems are full of mystical fervour, recalling the work of Angelus Silesius and Novalis, and have had a great, though possibly not a lasting, effect on some of the younger poets.

Rilke's third master was the sculptor Rodin, whose secretary he became. Rodin impressed him by his untiring and unceasing observation of his models, so that he seemed to live through the very expressions of their faces. Something of this intense desire to observe, and not only to observe but to enter the soul of the thing seen, may be traced in Rilke's later poems. Thus, in describing a panther in the Jardin des Plantes, he notes the weary look of the animal tired of gazing at the rows of bars beyond which there seems to be no world at all ; he sees the strong and supple body moving noiselessly and endlessly round the cage " as in a dance of strength about a centre where a great will stands bewitched."

These later poems have not the virtuosity of rhythm and metre of the earlier ; they are bolder and clearer in outline. " Josuas Landtag " (Joshua's Assembly) may serve as an example:

" So wie der Strom am Ausgang seine Dämme
Durchbricht mit seiner Mündung Übermass,
So brach nun durch die Ältesten der Stämme
Zum letztenmal die Stimme Josuas.

Wie waren die geschlagen, welche lachten,
Wie hielten alle Herz und Hände an,
Als hübe sich der Lärm von dreissig Schlachten
In einem Mund ; und dieser Mund begann.

Und wieder waren Tausende voll Staunen
Wie an dem grossen Tag vor Jericho,
Nun aber waren in ihm die Posaunen,
Und ihres Lebens Mauern schwankten so,

Dass sie sich wälzten, von Entsetzen trächtig
Und wehrlos schon und überwältigt, eh
Sie's noch gedachten, wie er eigenmächtig
Zu Gibeon die Sonne anschrie : 'Steh !'

. . . . . .

Und das war dieser ; dieser Alte war's,
Von dem sie meinten, dass er nicht mehr gelte
Inmitten seines hundertzehnten Jahrs.
Da stand er auf und brach in ihre Zelte.

Er ging wie Hagel nieder über Halmen.
'Was wollt ihr Gott versprechen ? Ungezählt
Stehn um euch Götter, wartend, dass ihr wählt.
Doch wenn ihr wählt, wird euch der Herr zermalmen.'

Und dann, mit einem Hochmut ohnegleichen :
'Ich und mein Haus, wir bleiben ihm vermählt.'

Da schrien sie alle : 'Hilf uns, gib ein Zeichen
Und stärke uns zu unsrer schweren Wahl.'

Aber sie sahn ihn, wie seit Jahren schweigend,
Zu seiner festen Stadt am Berge steigend ;
Und dann nicht mehr. Es war das letzte Mal."

" Even as a stream, its channel overfilling,
Bursts dyke and rampart, scorning bond and yoke,
So through the elders of the people thrilling
For the last time the voice of Joshua broke.

How were the mockers smitten by his anger !
Their hands and hearts were stilled, and lo, they heard
A sound arise—'twas thirty battles' clangour
In one man's mouth that spake the mighty word.

Again the gathered thousands gazed astounded
As on the wondrous day at Jericho,
But now in him the brazen trumpets sounded,
The bulwarks of their being trembled so,

And fell to earth in terror past all bearing,
Defenceless, overmastered, lost and won,
Ere they remembered how in lonely daring
He called by Gibeon ' Stand ' unto the sun.

. . . . . .

Yea, this old man was he, this man of men,
He whom they deemèd spent and unavailing,
Because he counted five score years and ten,
Now midst their tents he thundered, all-prevailing,

Like hail upon the tender blades descending,
' What will ye promise God ? A countless horde,
The gods are waiting now to hear your word,
Choose, but God comes in anger smiting, rending.'

And then in peerless pride and faith unbroken,
' I and my house will cleave unto the Lord.'

In fear they clamoured, ' Help, and show a token,
O strengthen us, heavy the choice and sore.'

But him they saw, as many a year, now still
Ascending to his stronghold on the hill,
And after looked upon his face no more."

From *Neue Gedichte*, Insel Verlag, Leipzig.

Hofmannsthal and Rilke are now dead, George and Münchhausen are over fifty, and it is almost as difficult to select an outstanding poet of the younger generation as it would be in England. But there is one, Franz Werfel, born in 1890 and, like Rilke, a native of Prague, who has published eight volumes of verse (beside dramas) and has revealed power and originality in an unusual degree. One of the most striking poems is "Der Ritt" (The Ride), written during the war years. The poet dreams that he is in a harvest field, and then he sees the corn laid as if by a hailstorm, and notices that many dead bodies are decaying there. One of them seems to rise and the dreamer finds himself carried on the back of a corpse. "He stood and turned his poor corroded face. . . . It was as if my own had decayed in a mirror."

"Er klappte mit dem Mund
Und sprach: 'Mein Bruder du, es ist genug,
Genug, dass Gott für dich mich fällte und erschlug.
Ich nahm dein Los auf mich, Du aber bist gesund.
Nun aber sage mir: Ist so gerichtet denn gerecht,
Dass du mein Reiter bist und Herr—und ich dein
Pferd und Knecht?

Steig nur aus deinem Sattel gleich,
Mach mein Genick von deinen Schenkeln frei!
Ich weiss: dir, guter Bruder, ist es einerlei.
Dein Aug ist von Erbarmen nass, dein Mut ist weich.
Verwes ich nicht für dich, vom Wurm geschwärzt, vom
Wind gebleicht?
Komm! Trag mich du ein Stückchen Wegs. Ich
bin so leicht, so leicht.'

Ich aber lachte voll Gewalt
Und spornte seinen Leib mit meinem Schuh.
' Ich steige nicht von meinem Sitz. Lauf zu ! Trab
Marsch ! Lauf zu !
Und spiegelst du mir noch so sehr die eigene Gestalt,
Und brökelt auch in deinem Antlitz ab mein eigenes
Gesicht,
Ich bin dein Reiter, toter Bruder, und ich lass dich
nicht !

Ich habe tief erkannt,
Ich tauchte auf den Grund der Angst ! Die würgt,
Die sich, zur Gnade nie verbürgt,
Ich fühl von nun an ewig um den Hals die Hand.
Ich reite, weil's mich reitet ! Wild bewusst der
lückenlosen Not
Bin ich ihr Herr und Reiter gar auf meinem eigenen
Tod ! '

Und lachend riss ich ab
Vom Haselbusch die Gerte, und ich schlug
Des Toten Flanken leicht. Er seufzte auf und trug
Erst störrisch meine Last, doch bald im scharfen Trab,
Und folgte endlich willig meiner heiteren Gewalt.
So ritt ich in den Abend ein und es umfing uns
Wald . . . "

" He clattered with his mouth
And said, ' My brother, is it not enow,
Enow that God for thee smote me and laid me low ?
On me I took thy fate. But thou hast health and youth;
And tell me this—was justice in the judgment that He
gave
That thou shouldst lord and rider be and I thy beast and
slave ?

Come down from thy high seat, I pray,
Let but my neck now from thy legs go free.
I know, good brother, 'tis all one to thee,
Thine eye is wet with pity, thy soft heart says, "Yea,
For thee I perished, blackened by the worm and by the
wind bleached white;
Come, bear me for a little space, I am so light, so light."

I laughed aloud in mastery,
And spurned his bending body with my foot,
"I will not leave my chosen seat. Now run, for thou
must do't,
I care not though thou mirrorest my living shape to me,
And my own face peels from the bones, where'er thy
flesh has dried,
I am thy rider, brother dead, and still on thee I ride!

Too well I understand
The inmost nature of my choking care,
That never once is moved to spare,
I feel for evermore around my neck its hand,
I ride, for it rides me. My doom may not be 'scaped
while I have breath,
I am Fate's lord and rider, yea and ride on mine own
Death.

And laughing then I tore,
A switch from out the bush, and with that rod
I struck the dead man's flanks. With many a sigh his
load,
First sullenly, but soon with quicker stride he bore,
And willingly he bent him to my brisk commands at
last,
I rode towards the setting sun; a wood enclosed us
fast."'"

From *Der Gerichtstag*, Kurt Wolff Verlag, München.

INDEX

INDEX

Arnold, Matthew, 70

Dach, Simon, 43
Dehmel, Richard, 134–40
Droste-Hülshoff, Annette von, 106

Eichendorff, Joseph von, 76–81,

Falke, Gustav, 130–3
Fleming, Paul, 47–8

Geibel, Emanuel, 104–5
George, Stefan, 140–3
Gerhardt, Paul, 40–1
Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, 53–64
Günther, Johann Christian, 49–50

Hagedorn, Friedrich von, 50
Hardenberg, Friedrich von (*see* Novalis)
Hausen, Friedrich von, 13
Hebbel, Friedrich, 106
Heine, Heinrich, 86–102
Herwegh, Georg, 103
Heyse, Paul, 104–6
Hofmannsthal, Hugo von, 143–8
Hölderlin, Friedrich, 72–3
Hutten, Ulrich von, 36–40

Keller, Gottfried, 111–4
Klopstock, Friedrich Gottlieb, 50–2
Kürenberg, Der von, 20–1

Liliencron, Detlev von, 124–30
Luther, Martin, 36

Meredith, George, 108
Meyer, Conrad Ferdinand, 114–6
Mörike, Eduard, 106–10
Morungen, Heinrich von, 21
Münchhausen, Börries von, 130, 133–4

Novalis, 74–5

Opitz, Martin, 44–7

Platen, August von, 85–6

Rilke, Rainer Maria, 148–51
Rückert, Friedrich, 81–2

Scheffler, Johann (Angelus Silesius), 42–3
Schiller, Friedrich von, 64–72
Spee, Friedrich von, 40–2
Storm, Theodor, 116–22

Tannhäuser, 22

Uhland, Ludwig, 81–2

Walther von der Vogelweide, 14–9
Werfel, Franz, 152–4

Date Due

AUG 4 1973

DEC 2 1 1976

APR 1 3 1978

PT571 .M3
Macleod, Norman
German lyric poetry

DATE | ISSUED TO 165732

165732

Einheit

6d.

Sudeten German Anti-Fascist Fortnightly.

Vol. 4. No. 15 17th July, 1943

TRENT UNIVERSITY
0 1164 0105821 3

Hanne Fischer:

Meine Sprache

I

Du bist mein heisser Atem, bist das Feuer
Der Seele selbst, mein grösseres, glühend Ich,
Nicht fremde Zutat und kein Ungeheuer,
An das gekettet hilflos ich verblich.

Nicht tief verhasst—wie nichts bist du mir teuer,
Und Jener lach' ich, die dir jammernd fluchen
Und wie aus drohend stürzendem Gemäuer
Aus dir vergeblich einen Ausweg suchen!

Du bist in mir, ich bin in dir geboren,
Wer immer auch dein irdisch Kleid geschändet.
Unsterblich bleibst du, wenn der Spuk geendet,
Sein Wüten längst vergessen und verloren.

Dann, leb' noch, seh' ich dich neu erblühen,
Vom Geiste neu in neuer Schönheit glühen!

II

Denn du bist Instrument, nicht Werk noch Ziel:
Gleich allen Zungen, die der Mensch erhalten,
Bist Schale du, kannst jeden Trank enthalten,
Und Stimme geben jedem Spiel.

Nicht grösser, noch geringer als die Schwestern,
Dem Morgen dienend, untertan dem Gestern,
Steigst ewig neu du aus dem ewig Alten.

Es macht dich Liebe glühn und Hass erkalten,
Erniedrigung stösst tief dich zu den Dirnen,
Doch neugeadelt heben sich die Stirnen
Die du bekränzt, bald wieder aus dem Staube.

So wahren wir, als ob wir Schätze trügen,
Das Erbe, das dem Ungeist fiel zum Raube,
Bis es gelingt, dich dem Chor zu fügen,
Darin, gereinigt vom Geschrei der Lügen,
Aufs Neue Wahrheit aus dir tönt und Glaube.